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Studies of
the Royal Commission
on the Status of Women
in Canada

Attitude of Union Workers
to Women in Industry

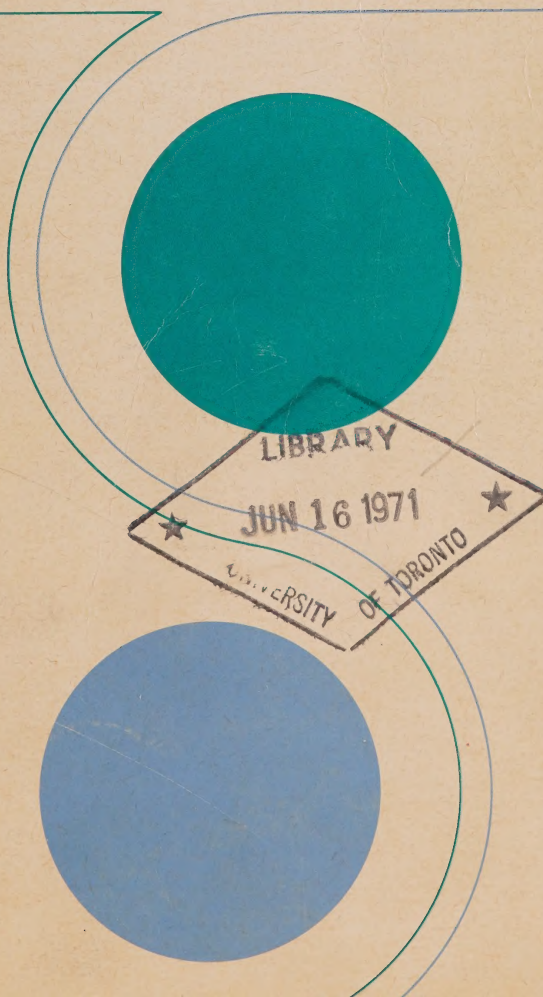
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Paule Sainte-Marie





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the Royal Commission
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in Canada*

**Attitude of Union Workers
to Women in Industry**

*Prepared by:
Renée Geoffroy and
Paule Sainte-Marie*

While this study was prepared for the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada and is being published under its auspices, the views expressed therein are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Commissioners.

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NOTE

The research that we have undertaken on behalf of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women has enabled us to gain a more accurate knowledge of the realities of feminine employment in the Province of Quebec. We acknowledge a debt of gratitude to the Royal Commission for having entrusted this work to us, and hope that this study will contribute in some measure to furthering the cause of Canadian women.

INTRODUCTION

The history of the Province of Quebec preserves no record of any concerted effort on the part of labour union organizations to advance the occupational status of women. Nevertheless, those who have closely followed developments in the world of labour realize that the problems peculiar to female employment have never ceased to preoccupy, to a greater or lesser extent, the unions concerned, and that the latter were the first to take up the cause and to promote the interests of the working woman. Generally speaking, women have reaped the advantages of better working conditions whenever they had unions exerting themselves in their behalf. Conversely, it is common knowledge that the worst exploitation of female workers occurs, even today, in precisely those sectors of the labour market that are not unionized.

Since the labour movement is dedicated to serve the interests of workers, it is perfectly appropriate for unionism to be concerned with the special problems of female employment. What is a matter of particular interest to us, however, is the behaviour of the unionized worker to syndical action, his manner of reacting to the problems posed by working women, his deep-seated attitude towards them and finally the degree to which he is ready to militate in favour of their rights. The attitude of the unionized workingman has, furthermore, considerable effect not only on the mentality of men towards work done by women, but also, to a certain extent, on the future of women's professional status.

Such are the premises on which this investigation was undertaken.

<u>Purpose</u>	To determine the attitudes of unionized workers to the employment of women in the Province of Quebec.
<u>Method of inquiry used</u>	Use was made of a questionnaire and of tape-recorded interviews.
<u>Questionnaire</u>	The questionnaire used (see Appendix) was composed of 51 questions grouped under the following headings: <ul style="list-style-type: none">-- women in gainful occupations-- wage parity-- overtime and night work

- maternity leave
- feminine participation in organized labour
- union experience

The answers collected on questionnaires were processed by means of an IBM computer.

The sample

Approximately 600 copies of the questionnaire were distributed among male union members in various regions of the Province. Of this number, 514 were retained for inclusion in this study.

Work sectors

Questionnaires included in this study were submitted by workers representing approximately 20 occupational sectors, as follows:

- the food industry
- bakeries and confectioneries
- commerce
- education
- communications services
- the electrical power industry
- manufacturers of cardboard containers
- public services
- the automobile industry
- the iron and steel industry
- the tobacco industry
- professionals and government officials
- the chemical products industry
- metallurgy
- hospital services
- transportation services
- social services
- the textile industry
- the garment industry

Occupations

Manual labourers	-	53.3%
Services	-	13.8%
Officials	-	8.4%
Professionals	-	5.4%
Commercial and office workers	-	4.5%
Teachers	-	2.3%
Others	-	9.1%

<u>Regions represented</u>	Unionized workers from	
	Montreal	- 53.5%
	Saguenay	- 15.8%
	Quebec region	- 8.8%
	Gulf of St. Lawrence region	- 8.2%
	Eastern Townships	- 7.8%
	St. Maurice region	- .8%
	Other regions within Quebec Province	- 3.1%
	Provinces other than Quebec	- .4%

General profile of unionized workers consulted by <u>questionnaire</u>	(For all answers collected for questions 1 to 10, refer to the questionnaire in the Appendix)	
	-- married	- 82.7%
	-- between the ages of 30 and 50 years	- 57.4%
	-- resident in the Montreal region (although every other region is also represented)	- 53.3%
	-- manual labourers	- 53.3%
	-- members of unions for at least 5 years	- 38.3%
	-- members of unions for at least 10 years	- 30.2%
	-- hold no post in the union but are rank and file members	- 57.2%
	(One-half of this number [i.e., 53.9%] work with women)	
	-- of French-Canadian extraction-	91.6%
	-- have their wives gainfully employed away from home	- 62.1%
	-- have their wives gainfully employed away from home on a full-time basis	- 15.4%

To sum up ...

The average unionized worker who answered the questionnaire was a French-Canadian manual labourer, actively involved in unionism, married, with children, and having a wife in gainful employment.

Interviews

A series of approximately 30 interviews with various individuals were tape-recorded. All those interviewed were men and held active union posts, of which the following are a sample:

- business representative
- president of union executive
- regional director
- full-time union employee
- technical advisor
- strike officer
- head of an industrial labour union
- records officer
- director of public relations of a labour union organization

We decided not to interview individuals employed in high-level executive posts in labour organizations, for the reason that there may exist considerable discrepancy between the preoccupations of those in high administrative positions and of rank-and file members.

The interviews enabled us to carry our analysis of the answers given on our questionnaire further, and to compare the preoccupations and attitudes of unionized workers with those of union officials as regards female employment.

Note

The size of our sample did not permit us to allow for the regional factor. In fact, the use of the regional variable did not affect appreciably the outcome of our survey.

The concern of union officials

In the course of our meetings with union officials two issues -- not originally included in our study -- were brought to our attention: those of

- work in the home, and
- part-time work

Domestic work

In consequence of a total lack of regulation, these domains represent, in effect, areas of the worst economic exploitation for women.

and

We believe that the Royal Commission on the Status of Women would be interested to learn of the attitudes of unionized workers to these two areas of female employment.

Part-time
female
employment

For this reason, we have decided to submit a report on these issues, in addition to those included in our original study plan.

The

Chapters

WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT

- Women filling the jobs of men
- Wage disparity
- Executive positions
- Night work
- Part-time work
- Work done at home

MARRIED WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT

- Maternity leave
- Nurseries
- Rights and privileges
- Absenteeism

WOMEN AND TRADE-UNIONISM

- Participation by women in union activities
- Executive positions in unions
- Integration of women in the union ranks
- Union experience
- Trade-unionism and working women

CONCLUSIONS

- New Canadians and English Canadians in trade unions

The

Appendices

- I - The questionnaire
Percentage analysis of answers

- II - The female labour force in Quebec

- Employed and unemployed women
- The relative representation of the sexes in diverse occupations
- Distribution of women according to marital status

QUEBEC

QUEBEC

CANADA

- III - Trade-union membership of women

CHAPTER 1

WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT

Before we proceed to the analysis of the results gathered in our enquiry, let us consider a number of fundamental concepts. These to a large extent determine the attitudes of unionized workers towards the gainful employment of women, and represent, in fact, the most commonly voiced opinions of those consulted or interviewed for our study.^{1/}

- 1 - Women take jobs on a "short term basis";
- 2 - They seek employment for reasons of economic necessity;
- 3 - Their salary is merely "additional income";
- 4 - Preferably, women should hold feminine occupations.

As we shall have occasion to see, female employment poses certain problems that cannot be divorced from the total context of the social and economic status of women. We shall attempt to outline here the social image of women in the Province of Quebec as it is reflected in the attitudes of unionized workers.

Women take jobs on a "short term basis"

One of the constant and characteristic themes that emerges in discussions of female employment is its temporary nature. Women accept positions on a short-term basis, while expecting to get married, while expecting their first child or as a temporary measure to supplement their husbands' incomes at first or to make the last mortgage payment on the house. Women themselves consider their involvement in the labour market as a temporary commitment, and unionized workers concur in this view. And thus, the working woman may remain in an indefinite, transitory status for ten, fifteen or twenty years. Hundreds and thousands of women are at work in offices, factories, hospitals, stores -- all, apparently, on a short-term basis, the average unionized worker is convinced.

^{1/} We have confined ourselves in this study to as precise and rigorous an interpretation of the facts as possible, carefully avoiding any unauthorized extrapolations from them. The Royal Commission may deem it useful to compare the points of view recorded here with those held by women themselves on the same subjects.

"You tell them: 'You are not getting what you are entitled to get for the work you're doing.' That is because women still, unfortunately, consider their role in industry as a strictly temporary one. Women think so, young girls think so, married women think so. They all believe that their employment is temporary and that they will quit their jobs at the first opportunity and go back home. They're convinced of it, that it is all a transitory arrangement. There isn't a girl, I am sure, at least not in the ordinary run of things, that accepts the idea, when she joins a garment firm at age seventeen, eighteen or nineteen, that she may have to make a career in the garment industry. This is the basic point. A woman always thinks of herself as being there while she's waiting for something to change, even if she spends her whole life in a job. That's really why women are generally less concerned with working conditions: because they are convinced that they will stay with the job for only a short time."

The proper place of woman (it is furthermore supposed) is in the home. It is never understood that gainful employment can be as natural an activity for women as it is for men. Since women tend to regard their occupations as a transitory involvement to be abandoned at the first opportunity, there arise a number of special problems: their integration into the work-situation becomes more difficult, and this in turn is the reason commonly assigned by unionized workers for high female absenteeism from work, for the disoriented course of feminine careers, for the rapid change-over of the female work-force, for the fact that women can seldom transcend relatively low levels of employment and that they lack professional qualifications. While workers will often blame women for the superficiality of their occupational motivation and adjustment, attributing these shortcomings to a lack of ambition, interest or competence, and to an unconcern about their own rights, workers themselves are quick to use the same arguments against female labour whenever they feel their own interests are threatened. Herein lies, in our opinion the fundamental ambiguity that surrounds the female work-force.

"All of the men that enter the labour market do so because they must support themselves, if they are bachelors, or a wife, if they are married. There are no exceptions in the case of men. But it is a different matter with women, except in a small number of exceptional cases. Most women could easily give up working and still not go

hungry. I think that if it comes to making a choice between two candidates for a job, both equally qualified to do it, the one with a family to support should have priority over the one without any dependants. If it is a question of deciding whether a widow with three dependants or a single young man should be hired, I feel that the widow should certainly get preference. But in the contrary circumstances, it is surely the man who ought to be hired."

Women working for reasons
of economic necessity

As a general rule, the majority of unionized employees found the concept difficult to accept that women may wish to pursue a gainful occupation for reasons other than those of pressing economic necessity. Among those interviewed, there were a few exceptional individuals who recognized that some women may elect to work simply for reasons of personal preference. But while such a motivation might be acceptable in the case of single women, in the case of those married and the mothers of children this preference was considered to signify the lack of some essential feminine attribute, and was therefore frowned upon.

Women's salaries are merely
"additional income"

Unless she happens to be a widow or a woman faced with burdensome family responsibilities, a woman (it was generally felt) will look upon her earnings merely as so much "additional income", no matter how substantial these earnings are. The man has always acted as the family provider -- and why should the workingman think otherwise if women themselves concur with this definition of male and female roles? The unionized worker can thus use the argument of "additional income" in order to justify his own prerogatives and to support his claims of first choice to positions open to both sexes. By the use of this argument, he can eliminate feminine job competition and vindicate his belief that women should be employed, if at all, in the less remunerative positions.

Preferably, women should practice
feminine occupations

If women were confined to doing work appropriate to their sex, the problems of the labour market would be infinitely simplified. The thorny problems of wage parity would be automatically solved; and unionized labour is prepared to defend

the principle of equal raises in pay. Furthermore, the establishment of a clear distinction between areas of masculine and feminine competence makes the embarrassing re-examination of traditional concepts of women's roles superfluous. As a rule, unionized workers regard the admission of women into occupational sectors previously reserved for men with some resentment and with feelings of having been dispossessed.

Unionized workers would like to see their female colleagues uphold and confirm their traditional image of women as creatures endowed with such feminine attributes as patience, delicacy and devotion. In the chapter dealing with executive positions, we shall see that workers are especially anxious to see that women should remain "feminine".

Whatever their rank or position may be, unionized workers in the final analysis favour the recognition of a particular work-status for women, preferring this to the integration of women into the labour-market on an equal footing with men.

All this does not, of course, mean that all organized employees react to the problems of female employment in the same way and that their ideas are invariably cast in the same mould. But one can nevertheless affirm, and with little chance of error, that the overwhelming majority of them cling to a certain idea of the part they should play in society, and expect women to help them achieve this aim. The following study will enable us to trace the development of this mentality and to see how it deals with certain practical problems that female employment presents to the unionized worker.

WOMEN FILLING THE JOBS OF MEN

"Women are taking over the jobs of men." This statement, so often heard among workers, especially at times of high unemployment, was put to the 514 unionized employees of our sample for their reaction. The following table gives a synopsis of the answers received.

14. WOMEN ARE TAKING THE PLACES OF MEN ON THE LABOUR MARKET

<u>1</u>	- yes	20.0%
<u>2</u>	- no	29.0%
<u>3</u>	- in certain cases	47.5%
<u>4</u>	- undecided	1.6%

Only 1.9% failed to answer the question.

Here, at last, is a question that met with few undecided answers. The majority of those answering it in the affirmative chose, nevertheless, to qualify their response: 47.5 per cent felt that women did, in certain cases, take the places of men on the labour market. Twenty per cent gave a frank "yes" as their answer, while only 29 per cent felt that women did not pose a threat to their jobs. Let us consider now some of the explanations given.

"The boys accept them, but let's just say, when they see a woman get a job in the factory, they say: 'There's another man out of work.' They see the woman as a replacement for the man. They cannot accept as easily as all that, that they may be replaced."

NO, THEY ARE NOT TAKING OUR PLACE

When the distinction between masculine and feminine tasks is clearly established, there is less tendency among unionized workers to consider women as their competitors for employment.

In the textile industry:

"There are types of work at which women are better than men. If you had asked me the same question 20 years ago, I would have replied to it differently. At that time, I was unsympathetic with the idea of women working. But my opinions have changed and evolved. The employment of

women is a fact of life today, and nothing is going to stop them from working."

A trade-union records officer:

"I see no reason why the job of, let's say, a typist-stenographer should be filled by a man simply because there happens to be a great deal of unemployment. I cannot see why female nurses should be laid off, when there is a shortage of jobs, in order to make room for male nurses.... In a well-run labour market, women definitely have their place...."

In a commercial firm:

"Generally speaking, it is a certainty that women do take the jobs of men, but in terms of my own personal experience where I work, I would say that this is not altogether so. Every employee has a fairly closely-defined task to accomplish. In business, women don't really enter into competition with men."

In the garment industry:

"This may possibly be the case in some other industries, but in the garment manufacturing business it does not create any problems. Whether a man or a woman is employed to sew on the sleeves, the salary earned is the same. A woman has as much right to work as a man has. I see no reason why one should consider women as taking the places of men. If a woman is as competent and efficient as a man, she ought to have the same chances of employment in our industry as he does."

SOME MEN FEEL THAT THEIR
JOBS ARE BEING THREATENED

Technological development has opened to women employment opportunities previously reserved for men. This is what most unionized workers find disquieting. So long as the accomplishment of a certain task required physical strength, it was automatically considered to be a man's work. But as less and less physical effort is required to accomplish specific tasks, as work becomes increasingly mechanized and automated, women find increasing opportunities for employment, particularly in industry.

In an electrical firm:

"Generally, men don't do the work of women and vice versa. But it has become easier for a woman today to do the work that a man used to do in the past, as, for example, installing electrical wires. This causes a bit of anxiety among the men."

JOB PRIORITY FOR MEN
AS FAMILY PROVIDERS

Without going so far as to affirm categorically that women are taking over the jobs of men, certain unionized workers feel that men, as fathers and family providers, ought to have prior claim on available jobs.

In the telephone industry:

"In our particular business, we do not have this problem. Employment tasks are clearly defined. But when it comes to having to make a choice between a man, who is the sole provider of a family, and a woman, who works merely to help her husband acquire and pay for some luxuries, things that the family does not really need, I would certainly choose the man. In my opinion, some distinction should be made at this level."

A difficult prejudice to
overcome

"At the level of trade-union organizations and federations of labour, we are agreed in principle that female employment is acceptable. It is at the level of the rank-and-file membership that you will encounter the opposition, because they feel their job security threatened and their prejudices will therefore come to the fore."

Career trade-unionists express no surprise at learning that 47.5 per cent of those who replied to the question in the questionnaire felt that women were, in some cases, displacing men in their jobs. According to those we have interviewed, this attitude is prevalent and stems from prejudice.

"As with all prejudices, one must let time take its course. The men will finish by understanding if it is explained to them, because, after all, it is only to be expected that an unemployed worker who sees his neighbour's wife working should feel, as a first reaction, that she has taken away his job. But in course of time

he will come to understand that her job is not at the same level as his, that her job is probably one he could not fill himself. I think that it is a clear case of prejudice, the same sort of attitude as we used to have against immigrants and immigration, years ago."

A defence-mechanism

"In times of full employment, you won't hear the men grumbling at the 'damn Frenchmen' who come over to take away their jobs, or at the women who ought to stay at home, or at the handicapped who are given work to do to help them out. But in periods of high unemployment, they become panicky, and all the old prejudices against women, immigrants, the handicapped and the mental deficientes come to the surface. They want to protect their jobs at any price. It's a kind of reflex, a defence-mechanism."

WAGE DISPARITY

Wage disparity between men and women

For years, trade-unions have denounced the flagrant inequalities existing between wages paid to men and to women for doing work of equal value. Labour organizations have never ceased to affirm the principle of "equal pay for equal work". Indeed, it is enough to refer to the reports of union presidents, the minutes of labour congresses and the various policy statements issued by labour organizations from time to time to realize that wage parity is one of the abiding concerns of the labour movement.^{1/}

^{1/}

Report of the National President of the Confederation of National Trade Unions to the Congress of 1964. "The employment of women - Equal pay for equal work," page 8.

- Brief submitted by the Confederation of National Trade Unions to the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, June 1968, page 45.

- Policy of the Quebec Federation of Labour, 1960-1967. "The rights of women", page 45.

- Brief submitted by the Quebec Federation of Labour to the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, June 1968, page 9.

How, then, can we explain that so little progress has been made in this direction so far? Is the slogan "equal pay for equal work" merely that, a slogan to be bandied about but impossible to implement in reality? Needless to say, there is considerable discrepancy between the principle, as a matter of theoretical acceptance by the union membership at labour conventions, and its practical application in life, and it was this discrepancy that we sought to investigate.

Accordingly, the questionnaire intended essentially to ascertain to what extent unionized workers were conscious of the existing situation, what importance they attributed to it, and, finally, whether they believed that wage parity would ever become a reality. The following is a tabulation of the responses obtained to questions 30 to 35 inclusive, concerning wage parity between the sexes.

Wage parity

30. THE PRINCIPLE OF WAGE
PARITY BETWEEN MEN AND
WOMEN IS NOT ACCEPTED
THROUGHOUT QUEBEC

	%
<u>1</u> - true	78.6
<u>2</u> - false	6.4
<u>3</u> - undecided	10.3

32. THE WAGE PARITY OF
MEN AND WOMEN IS A
QUESTION...

	%
<u>1</u> - of no importance	14.0
<u>2</u> - of major concern to trade-unions	76.3

34. HAS YOUR UNION TAKEN
A STAND ON THIS ISSUE?

	%
<u>1</u> - yes	37.7
<u>2</u> - no	25.5
<u>3</u> - not yet	21.0

31. IS THE PRINCIPLE OF "EQUAL
PAY FOR EQUAL WORK" APPLIED
IN YOUR FIELD OF EMPLOYMENT?

	%
<u>1</u> - yes	42.2
<u>2</u> - no	45.7

33. WOULD YOU BE PREPARED TO LEND
SUPPORT TO A WAGE PARITY
GRIEVANCE?

	%
<u>1</u> - yes	78.6
<u>2</u> - no	5.4
<u>3</u> - undecided	9.1

35. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT WAGE
PARITY WILL BE A REALITY...

	%
<u>1</u> - within 5 years	31.3
<u>2</u> - within 10 years	30.2
<u>3</u> - within 25 years	8.9
<u>4</u> - never	14.6

Wage Disparity: A matter
for trade-union action

Question number 30 was in the nature of an affirmation: it assumed that the disparity of the wages earned by the sexes is a fact generally recognized in the Province of Quebec. Of those replying to the question, 78.6 per cent agreed that it was; 6.4 per cent disagreed; while 10.3 per cent remained undecided. Since a certain number of those answering the question had overlooked the word "throughout", their answers were a reflection of the situation existing at their own places of employment, it was later ascertained.

The majority of unionized workers questioned were conscious that wage parity was an objective aimed for by trade-unions, and 78.6 per cent declared their readiness to lend their support to secure it. It may appear rather surprising at first glance that only 42.2 per cent of those interviewed indicated that wage parity was observed in their field of employment, while 45.7 per cent declared that it was not. How are we to explain this discrepancy? A trade-union may well struggle for the recognition of a principle, but there is a long and difficult path to be travelled from its recognition to its practical implementation.

As an executive officer of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (a union 55 per cent to 60 per cent of whose members are women) told us:

"At each and every one of our collective bargaining negotiations we ask for wage parity for women. Many of the glaring differences between the terms of men's and women's employment have been eliminated. Nevertheless, there still remains some inequality in a number of factories."

This is particularly the case with small enterprises which manage to survive economically thanks, in part, to lower feminine wages and, in part, to not having been penetrated by trade-unions.

"If it is a question of large corporations, my answer is 'no'; but with the small companies that operate marginally, I would say, yes, there is discrimination among employers. In every labour agreement we stipulate that there shall be no discrimination on the grounds of age, sex, religion or racial extraction, above all in matters of 'salary!'"

The situation is essentially the same in the services, that is, office work, personal services, etc. Only recently unionized, these work sectors employ, in effect, the highest proportion of women. (Cf., Statistics of the feminine labour force both in Canada as a whole and in Quebec in particular:

	<u>CANADA</u>	<u>QUEBEC</u>
Office work	28.6%	25.0%
Personal services	22.0%	20.7%)

Has your trade-union
taken a stand?

No: 25.5 per cent

It is obvious that not all trade-unions regard the question of wage disparity with an equal degree of alarm and concern. Hence probably that 25.5 per cent of the unionized employees questioned declared that their unions had not taken a specific stand on the issue, while another 21 per cent added the qualification "not yet". In enterprises with relatively low rates of female employment, it is possible that trade-unions are more concerned with problems touching the majority of their members than with problems, such as wage parity, which involve the interests of comparatively few individuals. But, in all sectors of employment, the traditional distinction between so-called feminine and masculine work tasks is so firmly established and deeply ingrained that no one -- not even the trade-unions themselves -- feels impelled to re-examine the question of salary scales based on sex.

"There are tasks in our business (the manufacture of cardboard boxes) that could easily be accomplished, even by young people. This is the kind of work that we entrust to our women employees. Take, for example, the case of a fancy box -- a de luxe box, so to speak -- on which there are all kinds of ribbons, little bits of decoration of all sorts. This is the type of work that I think women are more qualified to do than men. That's what we call piece work."

The career official of the Cardboard and Paper Processing Workers' Union, who made the statement quoted above, at the same time declared his willingness to protest against the employment of any woman to do work normally accomplished by a man, at a lower salary than that paid to a man. He felt,

however, that it was perfectly acceptable for women (doing so-called 'feminine' work) to be paid lower wages than men were being paid for their type of work. The question must then, be asked: the differentiation of work tasks on the basis of sex having been recognized by management, what might persuade a trade-union to raise the problem of wage parity between the sexes?

Another category of employees that appears to be exempt from the hardships of wage inequality is that of the professional class.

"The question, it seems to me, has never arisen at all with regard to salaries. The tacit rule under which we operate seems to be 'equal pay for equal work'. Our professional unions, representing engineers, social workers and so forth, have never felt it necessary to take an official stand on this issue, because the issue has never, so to speak, been a part of their experience."

Be this as it may, when the situation is examined at close quarters it becomes apparent that female members of professional unions nevertheless find themselves under a distinct disadvantage for, while wage parity may nominally apply, women do not enjoy the same opportunities for advancement as their male colleagues. This, in essence, is what one technical counsellor of the Federation of Professional Engineers told us:

"There is wage parity at my particular employment level. But the problem is, if I may qualify this statement, that there is no equality of opportunity for advancement. So far as it goes, however, professional men and women are subject to the same salary scales and the same system of ranks."

This aspect of feminine work will be resumed later. It has more to do with general attitudes concerning the use of women's qualifications.

It must furthermore be stressed here that, as several trade-union officials reminded us, the worst wage disparity exists in non-unionized employment sectors, notably in services.

Progress made by
trade-unions

On comparing the present employment situation of women

with that prevailing a decade ago, one has every reason to feel satisfied with the progress that has been made thanks to the sustained efforts of the unions. Among others, female teachers, hospital workers, public service employees and textile and garment workers have reaped the benefits of their efforts. Here are some examples:

In the textile industry:

"With us, in the Federation of Textile Workers, there exists no problem. Following collective bargaining with management, it has been conceded that women will earn the same wages as men for doing the same work. There is only one exception to this arrangement, in Beauce County, where the first collective labour agreement was signed two years ago. We are currently re-negotiating that contract."

In the garment industry:

"At one time feminine work did not fetch the same price as masculine work in the garment industry. This issue was raised at several collective bargaining negotiations.... If you take a close look at the more important labour agreements in the garment industry, you will notice that they no longer refer to men or women but rather to specific work operations."

In public services:

"I think very considerable progress has been made in the public service sector in recent years. Although the fight against wage disparity between men and women has been taken up in various employment fields by unions, it still remains the case that women generally occupy comparatively less remunerative positions. This, more than the question of simple wage parity, is what constitutes the principal problem in female labour."

In the public school system:

"Yes, we have achieved wage parity, but only recently. There used to be a tremendous disparity between the salaries of male and female teachers, and it was not until the collective agreement of 1964 that wage parity was achieved for the whole of the Montreal region. Since then, it has been extended to Quebec in its entirety. On September 1, 1960, wage parity simply did not exist. When the 1962-64 agreement was signed, there was still a

difference between the salaries earned by men and women, in the order of \$300. We finally disposed of that difference in the 1964-66 agreement, and have had complete parity ever since. As I said, there had been discrimination before that: as soon as a woman married, she was denied access to the profession, or rather to the professional labour market."

Feminine work tasks in
the manufacturing industry

Wherever women constitute the majority of the essential productive work-force -- as, for example, sewing machine operators in the garment industry, threaders in a textile mill or workers assembling machinery on a production line -- the question of wage disparity never seems to arise. The salaries paid, both to men and to women, are among the lowest in Canada and in the Province of Quebec. The performance of manual work tasks, requiring speed, precision, dexterity in the execution, as well as repetitive operations, is reserved for women. Both employers and workers willingly recognize the superiority of female labour in these work fields, and several statements made to us testify to this effect. Nonetheless, the salaries paid for such work are extremely low. Throughout the years, women have provided employers with an inexhaustible reservoir of cheap labour. The history of female labour is the history of cheap labour. But how can we hope for the disappearance, at last, of wage disparity between men and women, so long as certain work tasks continue to be regarded as "feminine"?

"The women don't do exactly
the same work as the men"

The executive of a union with 40 per cent
of its membership made up of women:

"If it was a question of a woman working, say, in the union offices in the same capacity as myself, there would be no reason why she should earn less than I do. But when you look around in a factory and see that the work entrusted to women is very different from that done by the men, then, evidently, there is no ground on which one could demand wage parity."

A member of the bakers'
and confectioners' union:

"I wouldn't say that women don't work. It's only that

there is no comparison between the work women do and the work men do. Let's just say that, in other words, a woman couldn't do the sort of work that a man does."

A member of the electricians'
union:

"In the employment field that concerns us, work sectors are so clearly defined that there can be no question of wage parity between men and women, not in an industry such as ours is".

What, in fact, does this
difference in the type of
work done involve?

The difference between the type of work performed by men and by women consists almost always in the greater demand upon physical strength that the former type makes. But whereas admittedly less muscular exertion is required by so-called 'feminine' work tasks, their accomplishment demands greater manual skill -- so much so, in fact, that men often find themselves incapable of executing such work with an efficiency equal to that of women.

Why, then, we may ask, should feminine work be considered to be of inferior value to that performed by men, since obviously from the employer's point of view it is of equal commercial value? Employers ultimately are no less dependent on the skills of their female, than of their male, employees.

The evaluation of work tasks and the
workload - a possible solution to the
problem?

"I have found that, as far as the School Commission of Montreal is concerned, the problem of wage disparity simply ceases to exist when work tasks are objectively evaluated and as long as the union remains vigilant".

An experience reported to us by an executive of a commercial trade-union affords a curious insight into the question of wage parity.

"Since 1956, we have had wage parity in every work sector that concerns our union. We have in fact gone so far as to introduce a distinction in our labour contracts between the operators of manual and of automatic elevators.

Evidently, manual elevators cannot be operated by women since it is generally recognized that women find the work physically too exacting. In other words, the work imposes excessive effort on women and this, in turn, means a higher wage when the task is evaluated. If the company employs men to run automatic elevators, on the other hand, their wages will remain the same as at present."

In some industrial manufacturing firms, trade-unions have been successful in urging the establishment of a system of work load evaluation, in order to calculate the efficiency bonus. Examples of such a system have been provided by the textile, garment and tobacco industries. Technicians measuring the time required for the performance of certain operations have found that, regardless of whether they were done by male or female operators, the efficiency bonus was the same.

In the hospital services work sector, affiliated with the National Federation of Services, preliminary steps have been taken to abolish flagrant wage inequalities and to move towards wage parity. As a first measure, work tasks were evaluated in an effort to remove regional inequalities.

"We began with the intention of doing away with regional disparities at first. All the workers, regardless of what region they work in, receive the same wages for the same work. Parity has practically been achieved, with the sole exception of a few towns outside Montreal which are also participating in the agreement. Thus, all union-members -- whether they work in the Magdalen Islands, or in La Sarre, or in Mont-Joli, -- are paid the same salary as they would earn in Montreal, minus \$1.00."

Thus, for several years now, the measurement of the work load has been an important tool, accepted in theory if not always in practice, by employers to resolve work problems arising from mechanization and to ease the relationship existing between employers and employees.

As far back as 1949, methods for measuring work effort were already being used in the Province of Quebec in the textile industry. At that time, engineers were hired and paid by the company. In 1969, following a strike organized by the National Federation of Textile Workers CSN and lasting for six months, the union-members claimed the right to verify the work of company engineers. The unions contested the validity of the production standards that had been set up by the technicians.

Eventually, their demands were met and a new clause was inserted in their collective labour agreement to the effect that, in the future, efficiency measurement technicians would be

- a) appointed by the unions from among workers employed in the textile industry;
- b) given theoretical training by the Industrial Engineering Service of CSN and by other specialized bodies, such as the COSE, and given practical training by the unions and the employers, the latter giving them free access to the plants;
- c) remunerated by the company with money collected, at the rate of a 3 cent-per-hour deduction, from each unionized worker.

In 1968, six technicians trained in work task measurement were working in the textile industry in collaboration with the National Federation of Textile Workers (CSN). At the last congress of this Federation, union-members voted to accept a recommendation to the effect that a physician should be hired to work in close collaboration with the engineers. Thus, in the textile industry at any rate, wage parity has become a reality.

Would wage parity work against
the interests of women?

In addition to possessing certain desirable qualities, the feminine work force has the unquestionable attraction of providing labour at low wages. But what will happen when wage parity between men and women is finally achieved?

An executive of the International
Union of Tobacco Workers:

"It isn't because they are liberal or soft-hearted that union-members favour the idea of wage parity. It is simply that the men are confident that when employers have to pay the same wages to women as to men, they will naturally prefer to hire men. Many have this idea."

A career union official adds
in the same vein:

"It has been pointed out that the campaign for wage parity between men and women is being fought, above all, by the male workers, and that, as far as they are concerned, the campaign is not motivated by principle but by an instinct

of self-preservation. The workers are, in other words, anxious to protect their own jobs, in the belief that employers may prefer to hire women, and women only, to do the work of men for less pay. If or when that should happen the men will be out of work. On the other hand, the women themselves are reluctant to ask for equal salaries with the men, because they, too, are afraid in turn that employers may prefer to hire male workers once the wage disparity is removed. This is especially so, because in a work situation individual workers will often perform fairly specialized operations. They may be called upon to repair a machine or to transport certain things, whether raw materials for the machine or finished products. If a factory employed only women, the employer would be obliged to have a man to take care of these tasks, whereas when there are male workers present, they can, each one of them, carry the materials themselves. To sum up, it seems to me that male workers are generally inclined, for reasons of job security, to favour wage parity, while the women, on the other hand, are far less happy about it."

A union official in the
textile industry:

"The average hourly wage in the textile industry is \$1.70. This is not a living wage for the men, and it probably explains the tremendous turn-over in our male labour force. With the low wages paid in the textile industry, it is proving much more attractive to women than to men. Women are willing to accept somewhat lower salaries for the same work as men, while the men, many of whom have family responsibilities, will find themselves compelled to look for jobs in other industries."

A contract negotiator in the Brotherhood
of Electrical Workers, a union with a
25 per cent female membership:

"There is another very important factor: from the moment that men and women make the same salary, you will no longer see women displacing men at their jobs -- men who are often sole supporters of families while the women are not. In point of fact, they hire women because they cost less to employ. The moment that there is wage parity, the job will go to the more competent person, regardless of sex."

A labour executive in the
electrical industry:

"Everybody knows that women simply are not built so as to be capable of as intense and sustained a physical exertion as men. In cases like this, it would be foolish to insist on wage parity. Where would it take us? To women digging ditches in the street or stringing up telephone wires on utility poles? But with tasks that men and women can accomplish with equal facility, I would say that wage parity would be the obvious answer and beneficial to both. In such circumstances, the job would be given to the more competent of the two."

All the foregoing opinions touch on wage parity with special reference to employment in industry. But what about other employment sectors?

A representative of the Eastern Canadian
Council of the International Union of
Professional and Office Workers:

"First of all, there seems to be a concentration of women in jobs of the more menial and inferior sort; and no sooner is a particular function upgraded either by the union or by any other body than women are displaced from the job of doing it. Take the example of teaching. The same thing is going to happen in secretarial positions. As soon as they become prestige jobs with good remuneration, we shall witness increasing numbers of men going into them."

Are union members prepared to strike
over the issue of wage parity?

Invariably, when this question was raised in the course of our interviews, we received the same answer. The following is an example:

"I doubt whether union members would be prepared to go on strike for the principle of wage parity. A worker will agree to undertake such an action only when he thinks it is in his own interests to do so. Whether it is a question of a group of men going on strike in order to obtain wage parity within the same industry, or a mixed group, when people take strike action, it affects them, first and foremost, financially. They will go on strike, in other words, only when they feel that they tend to benefit from such an action personally."

While union members may not be ready to precipitate strikes over the issue of wage parity, some 78.6 per cent declare their willingness to lend their support to demands for it. The minutes of labour-union congresses afford many similar instances, particularly in the field of the manufacturing industries in which certain work tasks have been evaluated without reference to the sex of the workers hired to do them.

As we have already seen union members habitually demand wage parity at every contract re-negotiation session, their objective being the ultimate elimination of all remunerative differences between men and women employed to do the same work. Union members are unwilling to go on strike purely on a matter of principle, since, generally, such drastic action is reserved to make good demands for higher pay. Other, less urgent, demands usually take the form of claims presented on the occasion of contract re-negotiations, wage parity being considered one of these.

One finds little evidence of stipulations bearing on wage parity in collective labour agreements. A study of some 302 collective labour agreements in force in the Province of Quebec, undertaken in 1965-66 by the provincial Department of Labour, revealed that only 25 of these agreements comprised clauses asserting the principle of "equal pay for equal work." The struggle for wage parity is fought, above all, at the negotiating table, and one of the ways of ascertaining that disparities no longer exist is to compare recent collective labour agreements with actual gains realized in the salary scale. Even if labour unions practice vigilance in the enforcement of the principle of wage parity, it is obvious that they cannot eliminate all inequalities in a single negotiation. Economists attached to various labour organizations are engaged at present in studying the numerous disparities still remaining, and the programmes of all major unions include plans to eliminate these disparities in future contract negotiations.

Do labour-unions believe that
wage parity can be realized?

Less than one third of the union-members questioned affirmed their belief that wage parity would come about within five years. These are either the optimists or the true militants of the movement. For the majority, the realization of parity may take up to 10 or even 25 years. In fact, 14.6 per cent do not believe that it will ever become a reality. Are these individuals pessimists, or merely realistic in their view of the problem? So long as the attitude prevails that

work done by women is inherently less valuable than work done by men, so long as both men and women persist in regarding feminine earnings merely as 'additional income', occupational discrimination will continue to exist also. In the course of our interviews it became abundantly clear (as it must be to anyone perusing the opinions reported in this chapter) that the deep-seated attitudes of unionized workers towards female work have evolved comparatively little. Up to a point, it is considered to be perfectly natural that women should accept lower wages, since these wages are merely supplemental income. The validity of classifying work tasks into feminine and masculine is seldom questioned. Women are not regarded as injured parties since they have their own special status.

It must, however, be noted here that certain union-members have urged the adoption of legislation to guarantee wage parity in Quebec. They feel dissatisfaction with the provisions of existing legislation on the subject. Others go even farther, and urge joint government and union action, with the active participation of the women concerned, to combat the existing injustice of the situation.

With special relevance to the field of teaching, Mr. Rioux, President of the Montreal Teachers' Alliance, expresses his views thus:

"As you are aware, only one-third of the working population of Quebec is unionized. If you examine the situation in unionized labour, you will find that wage disparity has practically disappeared here. This is important. On the other hand, if you consider the remaining two-thirds of the working population, you will see evidence here of tremendous disparities. If the government of Quebec accepted, fundamentally, the concept of unionized labour as sound for workers in all regions and of every occupation, from professional people to Gaspé fishermen, I believe that we could resolve these disparities once and for all. As an alternative course, existing labour organizations, instead of living off their rank-and-file membership and trying to win unions over at the expense of the workers, ought to join together in protesting against wage disparity. The women themselves ought to start clamouring for help and protesting forcibly. I am under the impression that they are at present complaining loudly, but I am not at all sure that they are also complaining intelligently. In my opinion, women themselves have to take the necessary initiative, by declaring their position on concrete and vital issues and by expressing their views and pushing their demands."

One of the individuals interviewed went so far as to question the underlying justice of our social institutions and structures. The conflict, according to him, must be fought not on the level of wage parity between men and women but on the level of class inequality in our capitalistic system.

"What is the point of having the female garment-worker make the same wages as her male counterpart, when he himself is in the 'muck' and earns a tenth part of what the garment factory executive earns? The problem is not simply one of wage equality between men and women; it is, in my opinion, one of disparity between the incomes and needs of all citizens in our society."

EXECUTIVE POSITIONS

Women in Executive Positions

The participation of women in the productive life of our country is one of the notable **phenomena** of our times. It would be perfectly normal to expect that the growing integration of women into the labour scene should, accordingly, bring with it equal opportunities for advancement. This, however, is clearly not the case. Studies have shown that the rate of female employment is considerably lower at the upper echelons than it is at the inferior ranks of the labour market.^{1/} Without wishing to urge the proportional distribution of executive positions between men and women -- a proposal that would be as absurd and ineffective as the suggestion that seats in Parliament be divided proportionally between male and female members -- it strikes one that the current disproportion is unjust. In the present state of things, when a woman accedes to an executive position, the fact is sufficiently singular to be reported in the women's sections of newspapers. But this, of course, is not our concern; what does concern us is the determination of how unionized workers react to this situation in the practical scheme of things, and what in their opinions the place of women should be with reference to executive posts.

^{1/}Cf., Facts and data of the Canadian work force. (See Appendix)

Frequently in our interviews we found that those questioned were reluctant to venture to express their own opinions candidly on these matters, so as not to be judged, but would tend to ascribe their own prejudices to the thinking of others -- of workers in general. Hence our recourse to two complementary questions: question number 20 placing the issue in the personal context of the individual interviewed, and question number 21 treating it in terms of a general and impersonal nature.

TABLE I

20. FOR YOU WORKING UNDER THE
DIRECTION OF A WOMAN WOULD BE

<u>1</u>	- indifferent	41.8%
<u>2</u>	- unpleasant	31.9%
<u>3</u>	- pleasant	9.9%
<u>4</u>	- undecided	12.1%

TABLE II

21. THE MAJORITY OF WORKING MEN
DO NOT LIKE HAVING WOMEN
AS THEIR BOSSES

<u>1</u>	- true	67.7%
<u>2</u>	- false	12.6%
<u>3</u>	- undecided	15.0%

One cannot affirm, on glancing at the Tables reproduced above, that the prospect of having to work under female direction is very pleasing to the unionized employees interviewed. In point of actual fact, we regret not having had the opportunity to pursue the question in greater detail with the exceptional 9.9 per cent of our sample who replied that working under the direction of a woman would be a 'pleasant' experience for them. Are they, we wonder, members of a new race, or do they merely represent the proportion of jokers in our statistical sample? Those indifferent to the sex of their supervisor, for whom the boss is merely the boss, number 215, that is, 41.8 per cent of the sample. It is interesting to compare this proportion with that given, under question number

21, by the answers of workers who feel that the majority of male employees resent working under female direction (67.7 per cent). Unionized workers believe the above statement to be a fact, in general: however, individually, they do not show such a strong resentment to working under the direction of women. At the same time, 164 workers (31.9 per cent of our sample) quite frankly answer that such an arrangement would be 'unpleasant' for them. As for the undecided, they represent from 12 to 15 per cent of those interviewed.

The testimony of a regional director of a labour organization is illustrative of the general attitude which the foregoing answers to our questionnaire reflect.

"For my own part, I would have no objection to working under the direction of a woman, for, personally, I consider women to be my social equals. But, if she were my superior and directed my work, I would probably accept her only at the professional level, not at other levels as well. Let's face it -- a woman who has professional qualifications has every justification to have equal status with a man. The great majority of men won't admit, of course, that women are their equals. But that is all the fault of the type of upbringing we get. From our earliest youth we have been told that women were inferior to men. That is where it all begins. Perhaps in another 20 years, the situation will have changed, but right now there is a psychological block among men on this question."

The following is a statement, very close in spirit to the previous one, made by a young (28-year old) representative of the International Union of Professional and Office Workers.

"Yes, I believe it is very hard for a man, for one reason or another, to work under the jurisdiction of a woman. There are obviously psychological factors involved here. I myself have never had to live with this particular situation though the few times that I did work under feminine direction it was not very satisfactory, because the woman in question was not sufficiently competent. As far as the workers themselves are concerned, the issue is clearly and purely emotional."

If we may believe the President of the Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the situation shows little sign of changing. Workers cannot imagine women in executive or managerial positions for the simple reason that, for them, the task of women is motherhood. Man is naturally suited to giving orders,

woman to bearing and bringing up children. What is more, according to many men, the two roles, male and female, are mutually incompatible.

"There is certainly some reticence on the part of men, and I believe that there always will be, at least as long as we don't have men that can give birth to children. ...Men will always be reluctant to see women occupying positions of authority, for most of them conceive the primary role of women as that of wives and mothers. It's as old as the world. Before a woman accedes to a high position, she should be very competent, indeed."

The great majority of those who answered the questions we put to them (73.2 per cent or 376 individuals) recognized that few women actually achieve high positions in the business and professional world. Here is how they explain this fact:

TABLE III

23. HOW WOULD YOU ACCOUNT FOR THE FACT THAT
FEW WOMEN ACHIEVE EXECUTIVE OR MANAGERIAL
POSITIONS?

<u>1</u>	- lack of ambition	8.9%
<u>2</u>	- lack of competence	22.0%
<u>3</u>	- lack of interest	9.5%
<u>4</u>	- lack of authority	23.3%
<u>5</u>	- other reasons	27.6%

The commonest explanations offered by those interviewed are the lack of competence and of authority among women. If women do not generally accede to higher positions, it is not because they lack either interest or ambition (9.5 per cent and 8.9 per cent, respectively), but chiefly because they do not possess the qualifications required for discharging such functions. One wonders whether, the same question being put to our respondents with reference to men, we would have received similar answers.

Our inquiries showed that union-members objected less vehemently to women being placed in managerial positions when the majority of the work-force consisted of individuals of their own sex. Examples of this attitude were encountered in the garment industry and in commercial enterprises.

"In the lingerie business, management is usually entrusted to a woman, and assistant managers are likewise normally women. Or take the example of businesses dealing in foundation garments: here, too, management is ordinarily in the hands of women. The same thing applies in the case of retail stores specializing in women's dresses. On the other hand, employment in men's wear retail stores is customarily reserved for men, who also hold the managerial posts."

We may add that, generally speaking, even ranking trade-union officials express some doubt concerning the suitability of women for employment as managers. They do not possess the capacity of giving orders, we were frequently told, and in some cases the managerial aptitudes of women were disputed even by women themselves. Thus women, in some measure, furnish arguments against their own advancement to the male worker, if not, indeed, to the employer himself. The unfavourable reaction of male, and sometimes female, employees to the promotion of women to posts of authority has on occasion forced management to revise their policy of personnel promotion. The most flagrant example of this that we have collected is one reported by an officer of the International Union of Bakers and Confectioners.

"In our line of work, women occupying managerial positions are simply no longer to be found. The men were opposed to having them and were unwilling to take orders from them in the plant. They refused to work, or, if they didn't refuse, they did the work very reluctantly. This brought about constant bickering between the female manager and the workers with the result that, naturally, the company suffered. As a result, there was an agreement concluded between labour and management to relieve women of managerial posts, especially when the employees to be managed were men. At present, the female workers receive their directives from women, but high executive posts are filled by men."

The men are boycotting...

The example that we have cited will serve to explain the nature of the answers received to question number 24. This question had been intended to test the validity of an opinion quite prevalent among women, namely, that men consciously boycott them on the labour market. As the following tabulation of answers will indicate, the question met with no very strong objection.

TABLE IV

24. WOMEN ARE OFTEN HEARD TO COMPLAIN
THAT THEY HAVE NO ACCESS TO MANAGERIAL
POSTS BECAUSE MEN BOYCOTT THEIR APPOINTMENT

<u>1</u>	- true	35.8%
<u>2</u>	- false	42.2%
<u>3</u>	- undecided	18.1%

While 217 of the individuals questioned denied the validity of the allegation, 184 -- that is, 35.8 per cent -- did not feel it necessary to challenge the statement that men were boycotting their advancement. More than one-third of the union members that answered our questionnaire conceded, in other words, that men were practising discriminatory obstruction against women. This must be sufficiently disquieting for female employees, particularly when they look at the reasons offered in justification of this practice by their fellow workers of the opposite sex. First of all, it is argued that women do not possess the necessary aptitudes to hold managerial positions; secondly, that such positions are not compatible with their established roles in society. From professing these opinions, it is only one step to the conviction that women's promotion must be boycotted, for their own good.

We shall not trouble to recite the endless chorus of remarks that we have heard, to the effect that "women are too emotional, partisan", and so forth. Suffice it to reproduce here only those testimonies that bring some new point of view to bear on the question.

"Women have never learned how to work together with men. This amounts to a grave deficiency when it comes to directing the work of a team of men. In situations of this type, they are not themselves."

"If women are seldom found in managerial positions, it is because they lack motivation, which is the most important thing of all. Women don't consider their jobs as permanent. It is also possible that it is caused by an inferiority complex...."

"The chief reason, I believe, is that a woman, who is a wife and mother, has certain obligations that a man does not have. I do not think that one-tenth of all the women

that work have any intention of continuing to do so throughout their lives and of building a career. Even in industry and commerce, women with very good jobs will no doubt prefer to leave these to men in order to go home and play the role of mothers."

Women have the means
for changing their lot

The view of women's opportunities for promotion and for access to managerial posts that emerges from our questionnaires and interviews is altogether less than encouraging. According to executives consulted in our study, women still have a long way to go, if they wish to enjoy equal opportunities with men, for they have the means necessary for changing the mentality of the public. This gives us food for thought...

"It is through their education, their competence, their professional training and, above all, through a change in their mentality that women will ensure their own free access to executive and managerial positions. They will have to change, and change radically, their way of looking at life, of visualizing the opposite sex, of conforming to the traditional role of submissiveness. Take the case of an office worker, for example. Certainly, the secretary has a role to play; but she ought to consider herself as the collaborator, rather than as the servant, of her boss. Such a reform presupposes a change in the attitudes both of men and of women. Moreover, people have more respect for force than they do for weakness. When one is confronted with a strong person, one has respect for him; when the other person is weak, one's first impulse is to exploit him. We live in a man's world. Men have not been generous in affording women opportunities for advancement; conversely, women have not invariably felt confident that they could successfully hold positions equal to the positions of men. Women must take matters into their own hands: they must force men to change their attitude. I feel certain that there will be a very marked difference between our generation (not yours, Madam) and the next, and that the women of the coming generation will have fewer complexes and will be more emancipated."

NIGHT WORK

In Quebec, the Statute concerning industrial and commercial establishments^{1/} prohibits women from working in factories before 6 a.m. and after 6 p.m. Notwithstanding these dispositions, an employer may obtain authorization to employ women or boys under 18 years of age in an enterprise operation on a two- or three-shift basis, the permission being conditional upon the following: first, that the workday shall not be more than eight hours in duration and, secondly, that women and those under 18 years of age shall not be employed in the third, or night, shift.

This legislative restriction on night work is the only legal regulation in force within the Province. There is no general legislation limiting the number of work hours per day or per week.

For several years now, industry has been campaigning for the amendment or repeal of the law so as to introduce a measure of flexibility into the system along the lines of the situation in existence in Ontario. In June 1965, the government of Quebec appointed a Commission of inquiry on the problems of night work in the case of women employees. The Committee turned in its report in January 1966, expressing no opposition to the idea of legalizing the employment of women on the third, or night shift. One of the commissioners submitted a dissenting report. The two principal labour organizations -- the CNTU and the QFL -- joined forces at the time that the Commission was established in their refusal to participate in the investigation on the grounds that the Commission's mandate was not sufficiently broad; on several subsequent occasions, they requested the enlargement of the Commission's field of inquiry.

After these events had taken place, the question of female employment on the night shift of industrial enterprises was taken up by the union rank-and-file. The problem became an issue in certain labour contract negotiations. Because the matter of female night work raises a number of interesting questions, and, incidentally, reveals through the reactions expressed to it a certain outlook, we believed that it merited investigation.

^{1/} Statutes and By-laws concerning Industrial and Commercial Establishments (SRQ 1941, Chapter 175), revised edition with amendments 1962, articles 15 - 17 - 18 - 70c.

TABLE V

36. WOMEN SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO
WORK THE NIGHT SHIFT IN
MANUFACTURING FIRMS

<u>1</u>	- yes	8.6%
<u>2</u>	- no	67.5%
<u>3</u>	- under certain conditions	21.0%

The decisive majority of those questioned were opposed to the employment of women on the night shift of industrial enterprises. As for the reasons for this opposition, they come in all shapes and are of all kinds, as the following examples will show:

Night work is not 'feminine':

"I think it is already unpleasant enough for women to have to work in a factory during the day and evenings (because they are allowed to work evenings), without allowing them to work also, let's say, from midnight until eight o'clock in the morning."

Night work is destructive of family life:

"If a woman is away from home all night, I cannot imagine how her husband and her children can manage."

Night work benefits the employer:

"Most of those who employ women for night work do so because they find it saves them money. Women are paid less than men, but if there was wage parity, with women earning the same amounts of money as men, I think half your problem would be solved right away. I believe that the majority of the manufacturers who employ women for night work are motivated by the wish to save money."

Night work for women would put male workers at a disadvantage:

"Perhaps the men have greater job security when women are not allowed to work nights. In other words, it is certain that under existing conditions employers have to hire men at least for night work."

Under certain conditions

Twenty-one per cent of those who answered our question opted for night work being permitted for women but only on certain conditions. The following is the opinion of one old textile union-member.

"It is my opinion that women should not be allowed to work nights, at any rate, not under conditions as they exist today. But I think that it might be relevant to discuss possible improvements in working conditions, so as to make night work acceptable to women. Thus, by way of improvement, women could be given rest periods, followed by a half-hour break for a meal, and then by another rest period, all paid for, so as to provide them with the conditions they need to stay with the job. Don't forget that, as things are today, night work is extremely trying even for men. About 80 per cent of the labour force is not willing to work nights simply because workers find they cannot carry on for an indefinite period, say, a period of 10 years, working the night shift. A man may be able to work nights for five or 10 years, but under existing conditions he simply cannot do it throughout his lifetime. That's why I find that in the present situation night work for women is indefensible."

This observation on feminine night work in the manufacturing industry coincides by and large with the opinion generally held by workers concerning the industrial employment of women. As a rule, unionized workers are of the belief that factory work is not a suitable occupation for women and that industrial plants do not offer them adequate working conditions.

In spite of notable improvements, particularly in recently constructed industrial plants, working conditions are still, generally speaking, quite unsatisfactory in industry. This was the reason why the two labour organizations joined in requesting the Government to broaden the mandate of the Commission of inquiry, to include a comprehensive study of the working conditions that female workers encountered in industry.

Night work is inhuman

The majority of those who answered question number 37 (73.2 per cent) expressed their opposition to night work, regardless of the sex of the worker. Were it not for the fact that certain industrial plants are obliged for technological

reasons to maintain continuous operation, these individuals would favour the total abolition of night work. The expressions used by those interviewed on the subject are enough to show the intensity of the dislike with which most workers contemplate night work: "it is inhuman" - "it turns your life upside down" - "one is cut off from the world". That night work is by no means normal is proven by the fact that employers must pay higher wages to induce their labour force to accept it. "You can see that it isn't normal", say those union members who were polled.

A unionized journalist:

"I find the practice of night work inhuman in some cases, as for example in the case of manual workers. There is no reason why production could not be interrupted at night. It's altogether a different matter, of course, in an editorial office where the work has to go on around the clock. But then the work done there is of another kind and is carried out in a different atmosphere. It's not a workshop or industry or any such thing. Personally, I think night work is inhuman".

Equality implies both
equal rights and equal duties

Of those questioned, 8.6 per cent were in favour of permitting women to do night work in industry. Their argument, in essence, was the following: if women claim equality with men, they must logically accept the unpleasant, as well as the pleasant, consequences of their equal status with men. Several union officials expressed this attitude. Thus, while the average rank-and-file member is categorically opposed to night work for women, union leaders (those very individuals that have negotiated in favour of feminine work) adopt a far more egalitarian stance. If men and women are to enjoy the same rights with reference to salaries and working conditions, what justification exists for exempting women from doing night work?

A union executive in
the garment industry:

"I see no reason why women couldn't or shouldn't work nights. Mind you, this is not the official stand of our union. But for myself, personally, that changes nothing whatever."

A union negotiator in the
electrical industry:

"As far as I am concerned, I am dead against night work, both for men and for women. But there are certain types of industry which, by their nature, require a continuous, round-the-clock operation. If women undertake to work in such factories, it seems to me that they ought to take the bad with the good. I couldn't, for example, conceive a telephone company employing female operators by day and male operators by night. If women aim for wage parity and equal treatment, they had better be ready to share in all aspects of work equally, whether by day or by night."

A union records officer:

"Suppose that I were, first of all, to say no. I think that I would do so out of a sense of gallantry, feeling that a woman ought not to have to work nights. For my own part, personally, I would have no part of night work. I find it is a dehumanizing experience, and, as such, it should not be allowed to men either, let alone to women. On the other hand, if we think in terms of the equality of men and women in the domain of work, we must recognize that, once that premise is granted, it must follow that women will have to accept the disadvantages as well as the advantages of equality."

A union official in the brotherhood
of engineers:

"Personally, I believe that we ought to leave the question to the discretion of those concerned. I believe that a man decides when he is going to work (as much as he can decide anything about his work), and it seems to me that a woman ought to have the same right of decision. If a married woman decides together with her husband that she wishes to go to work, her decision should have all the consequences, and the same consequences, as a man's decision to do so."

A permanent union official:

"Exactly my position. Women say that they are the equals of men. It won't kill them any more than it kills the men to have to work nights. It will be scheduled, and the hours of work will be convenient. It is not going to be a question of 70-hour or 75-hour weeks. The most that will be permitted will be a 32- or 35- hour week."

A white-collar union official:

"I can conceive no reason why we should not allow women to work nights. In my opinion, this is a form of discrimination. If we say that women ought to have rights, the same rights as men have concerning employment, I am completely in favour of such a development. As soon as that is admitted, the question of whether they ought to work nights or not is automatically answered. The answer, obviously, is in the affirmative, since men also work nights."

A textile union official:

"I see no reason why women should be opposed to this. When one takes a job in an industry, one learns that the work is done in shifts, from such and such hour to such and such. If the conditions suit one, one will take the job; if not, one won't. But why should it be the men that have to do night work? That is totally incomprehensible to me."

The attitude of women

According to union leaders working in industries with a high proportion of female employees, working women are not opposed to the idea of night work. Some women even consider it as having certain attractions since night work would allow some women to hold down a job without incurring the expense of a nursery or of baby-sitters.

As for single women, those presently employed on the second work shift would prefer being permitted to work nights as well, for, as they say, "one cannot go out socially when one is working on the second shift."

Even if these opinions are shared by a considerable number of women, it cannot be affirmed categorically that women, as such, would endorse overwhelmingly the idea of night work in industrial occupations. But the work force is not invariably consulted on questions of this kind, as the following example shows:

"I have had suggestions last year from employers in the corrugated paper containers business urging that women be permitted to work nights."

Question: "Did your union take a stand on the issue, either for or against?"

Answer: "Some of the women would have been in favour of it. So far as the employer's request was concerned, I took it upon myself to say 'no', however, and then forwarded a report of it to the union executive which approved the action that I had taken."

Work essential to production

"Very often, you have married women who express a preference to work at night or in the evenings, because they have somebody at their homes to look after the children. I am thinking especially of the woman whose husband is employed in a day-time occupation and who would be obliged (if she were to work by day) to carry the expense of a baby-sitter. In such a situation, she will clearly prefer to be at home while her husband is away at work, and to go to work in the evening or at night. The men, for their part, seem to take it as quite natural that there are certain tasks best done by women. I can hardly imagine employing men as telephone operators, for example. The workers seem also to recognize that it is not always possible for a company or an industrial plant to confine its operations to the day shift...!"

A job pleasing to few

"Without generalizing, I would say that women have tended to express interest in working on the night shift, as long as they could be relieved of having to work from four in the afternoon until midnight. At a certain age, night work is more attractive to girls, because it leaves them free to go out in the evening, and then allows them to go to work afterwards. Because they are young, they are physically able to cope. But once you get into the 35, 36, 37-year age range, you notice a growing reticence on the part of women with regard to night work. On the other hand, from the economic point of view, as long as we get more work under such an arrangement, it is acceptable to us. It is impossible to make generalized and accurate value judgments."

Have the unions taken a stand on the question of night work?

According to 8.8 per cent of those who answered question number 39 of our questionnaire, their trade-unions had

officially taken a stand in favour of night work being permitted to women, whereas 29.6 per cent of those questioned reported that their unions had expressed opposition to it. The majority of the trade-unions have never declared their attitudes on this issue since the question of night work simply does not apply to their membership.

"No position has been taken by us on this point. I should add that the question of night work has never arisen in our line of employment, and we feel ill-prepared to declare our attitude to the problem of night work."

Several trade-union officials in businesses where the question has not yet arisen are, however, asking themselves whether, with the high cost of machinery and re-tooling, the difficulty encountered in attracting investors, and the growing pressure of foreign competition, the day may not come when the problem of night work will face them, too. This is the case in the garment industry.

"The Federation has never taken a stand on the issue because the need for such a stand has never arisen. We have no night-work problem, simply because there is no night work in the garment industry. In all our shops, work goes on from eight to five. But I believe that eventually, as the equipment becomes increasingly expensive, we shall end up with having two, even three shifts, and that work will go on around the clock. When that time comes, the problem will have to be dealt with. But, for the present, it has never arisen. For my own part, I personally see no reason to object to women working nights."

Textile workers: an interesting case

"At Dominion Textile where, at the present time, there exists a clause in our collective labour agreement prohibiting night work to women, the Company has for the last four years or so done everything in its power to prevail upon the Provincial Government to change the law. At our last contract negotiations, in 1966, following a strike of five months' duration, the union accepted that at the expiration of the present labour contract the prohibition against women's night work should be lifted and, if a change could be effected in the law, the union would have no objection against women working the night shift. The

companies claim that there is a production bottleneck at present and that a variety of occupations could well be discharged by women working on a third shift. Because of the legal restriction, these positions cannot be filled with women, particularly since our labour agreements specify that all job openings in the second shift will go to men. This means, in effect, that there are no occupations reserved for the women. It could be a question of a job in threading, suitable either for a man or for a woman. It seems to me that the restriction would not have been dropped if the women themselves had decided to keep it. But the matter had been put up to our meetings, and some 4,000 members (both male and female) approved it. They were told that the restriction would be lifted, and they accepted it. I should add that this happened after five months of strike. If the question had been taken up earlier, at the beginning of the strike, their reaction would have been different. When the matter was put to the vote, the women made no objection. They didn't tell us that they would not work, and this was an important issue in the negotiations. After that, we simply took for granted that the women were not very much opposed to night work, because, after all, in services they accept night work. Then they said: there are those who work, and it is quite possible that we too might work at night in the textile industry if certain conditions are met. There is a 15 per cent bonus paid to the night shift people, in certain cases. This could amount to 10¢ or 12¢ per hour -- but, whatever it is, the night workers always make more than those employed on the first and second shifts."

What other conditions are there?

"That there be rest-halls set up in each department for the women to relax in; that there be adequate allowance made for fatigue. From the point of view of transport, we will stipulate that good facilities be provided so that the women can leave work or get to work easily in the morning and at night."

Will the union drop the restriction as a quid pro quo in return for other things?

"No, there was no bartering away of rights here. It was rather one of the results of our negotiations. We consulted our rank-and-file membership to explain the situation to them, and in doing so we learned that it was, above all, not the women that opposed the idea of night work. We found that it was more the men. For precisely what reason?

Perhaps because they would henceforth be confined to the night shift, or perhaps because they are afraid of losing their jobs. There would be very many more women in the textile industry if this restriction did not exist, with regard to night work. At present, when a person is needed to work on the night shift, the employer has no alternative but to hire a man. Then, if there should occur an opening on the second or on the first shift, if a man has more seniority and is working on the third shift, he has a chance to get to work on the second or on the first shift. But if it is a woman, then, instead of hiring a man to work on the third shift, they will always hire women for jobs such as threading and, above all, weaving. Now, these are precisely the occupations that require most of the labour force, that is, threading and weaving. Perhaps men could retain the jobs in carding -- if not, they will be replaced by women."

PART-TIME WORK

The definition of the term 'part-time work' is certainly a flexible one. It is normally used to designate the employment of a person who works less than the regular number of hours within any given occupational sector. Most of this supplementary work-force seems, as a general rule, to be made up of women. Thus, 8 per cent of our sample population declared that their wives did part-time work.

Our object is not to discuss the benefits and drawbacks of part-time employment with reference to the professional lives of women. On the other hand, we should stress that trade-unions, by and large, have shown little favour for employment on a part-time basis. They see it as a constant menace to regular full-time employees' job security, and consider it as a source of subtle exploitation of part-time female workers. The latter are almost invariably deprived of the benefits usually accorded to full-time workers: statutory holidays, paid vacation, retirement plan, health-insurance, etc. In addition, the part-time female worker has virtually no chance of ever getting promoted.

Faced with this situation and with the impossibility of doing away with part-time work altogether since it fills certain distinct manpower needs existing in various work sectors, unions have managed to implement controls of part-time employment, notably in the hospital services sector where

much use is made of it. This means, in effect, that part-time employees are considered members of the union in labour contract negotiations and derive protection from the collective agreement.

The following are accounts by union executives of five distinct solutions to the problem of part-time jobs as worked out by five unions.

In the hospital services sector:

"Hospitals make extensive and increasing use of part-time staff. We consider this to be a dangerous tendency, and one that gives every indication of becoming more and more widespread for reasons of economy. And yet, when we add up all the part-time work, it produces so much full-time employment. Why not hire qualified full-time personnel then? In the course of our last contract negotiations, we managed to obtain a certain degree of protection for part-time employees.^{1/}

22.06 Those employed on a part-time basis will benefit from all clauses of the present labour agreement.
(Agreement - article 1.01)

22.07 Salaries will be calculated on a pro rata basis for hours of work.

22.08 Fringe benefits to which those employed on a part-time basis are entitled will be paid to them each pay-day, and will be computed as follows:

1. Annual vacation: 2 per cent of the employee's salary for each week of vacation to which the employee is entitled;
2. Paid holidays: 4.5 per cent of the salary;
3. Sick leave: 6 per cent of the salary."

^{1/}Collective work agreement 1966-68, National Federation of Services.

In a large chain store:

"Of the 523 women composing our salaried staff, between 65 and 70 per cent work on a part-time basis. Not all these women work for reasons of economic necessity. Some of them take employment as a pastime. It all depends on what their tasks are: some may make \$30, \$40, or \$50 per week. We fixed a certain number of hours as constituting part-time employment. This means that, while there is no minimum on the number of hours an employee may work, any staff member working more than 32½ hours may claim salary at the rate of 1½ times the basic rate for the hours in excess of that number. Thus the employer will be less motivated to employ the part-time worker increasingly, to the ultimate detriment and replacement of the full-time employee. If a part-time employee is sent home after less than three hours of work, he or she will be paid for three hours. Besides, the part-time staff member reaps the benefits of job security that are the incidents of full-time employment. In other businesses, part-time employees have no job security whatsoever. There is nothing to stop the employer from making them come in the morning and from sending them home at the beginning of the afternoon because there does not happen to be very much work. In our Company, by contrast, part-time employment is also covered by our collective labour agreement."

Art. 6.02 Regular part-time employees

All salaried employees who work at least 22½ hours and at most 32½ hours per week, the working hours of which shall be distributed over a period of five days, whether consecutive or not, within the regular working week, and who have completed the required number of hours in service, as probationary salaried employees will be considered regular part-time employees. These employees will receive salaries computed on a pro rata basis, at a rate corresponding at least to the salary provided for by the salary scale for their occupational category, corresponding to the number of hours they will have worked. The rule covering overtime pay will be effective in determining the salary earned for all working hours in excess of 32½ per week. Such employees will, furthermore, enjoy, in all other respects, the same advantages and benefits as other regular salaried employees....^{1/}

^{1/} Agreement concluded between Dupuis Frères Limitée and the Union of Employees of Dupuis Frères Limitée, on December 5, 1967.

There are, in addition to part-time employees, 'occasional' employees in the retail trade. These are individuals whose role is either to replace regular employees while absent or to help out on special occasions, such as week-ends, days of sale, etc. Such 'occasional' help are not subject to the collective work agreement since they are merely supernumeraries who come with the purpose of helping out the regular employees."

In the public school system:

"There are, among our teachers, a certain number of women who work on a part-time basis and others who work as replacements or supply teachers. The difference between the two categories is that a supply teacher will be in a particular post for very short periods of time, say, one or two days, for example, when a regular teacher is sick. Part-time teaching is, of course, quite a different thing. We have for instance, some teachers who study during the morning and are at their jobs only half-a-day, in the afternoon. These people are given half pay.

Supply teachers are not under contract with the school commission. Nevertheless, we have asked to have our certificates of accreditation amended so that we may also represent this category of occasional employees who, under current conditions, enjoy no measure of security whatever. They derive no benefits from our collective labour agreement. Supply teachers are not paid at the same rate as regular teachers are. In Montreal, for example, supply teachers are probably worse paid than elsewhere in the Province of Quebec: a woman makes \$16 per day, and a man \$18 per day. We have addressed ourselves to this problem and I believe that our union will succeed in solving it."

In the electrical industry:

"In some of our plants, the concept of part-time employment does exist. Companies tend to be rather favourably disposed to this system for, suppose that there is a special product to be manufactured and that the most skilled and capable women in the field cannot accept full-time employment because they are married. In such cases, the Company will be willing to have these women come to work, say, two or three days a week, for four hours per day. These employees are in no way protected by our collective labour agreement."

In the postal service:

"Women who work in a post office for four or five hours per day are sadly exploited. They are hired because they are needed, and they are put to work 'speed off'. Their employment is not prohibited by the collective labour agreement. They have made attempts to organize but the Government has taken all the steps it could take to prevent them from doing so. Our union, however, is being reorganized and will be in a position to admit these workers into its ranks."

Since the union members interviewed in the course of our investigation consistently underlined the problems which the employment of part-time workers raised for their unions, we thought it well worth our while to record their remarks in our report. According to our informants, the recourse to part-time employment is on the increase. This means of securing staff allows employers to avail themselves of trained and inexpensive labour virtually at a moment's notice, without being in any way obliged to provide fringe benefits in return. It was in response to this practice, and the threat which it implies, that the Quebec Federation of Labour requested, in 1965, "that the Provincial Government undertake an inquiry into the questions of part-time work and female employment."

WORK DONE AT HOME

WORK DONE AT HOME

NOT SUBJECT TO REGULATION

The domestic system of production is one enjoying considerable currency in our times, although, owing to its virtually clandestine nature, no precise estimate of its extent may be made. Workers in the garment industry are particularly affected by the unfair competition presented by this source of labour. Home work is essentially a form of economic exploitation of the female labour-force: the salaries earned are usually lower than the minimum stipulated by law; the number of working hours is unlimited; the incidental costs of manufacture (lighting, heating, rent, depreciation of the sewing machine, etc.) are expected to be absorbed by the workers. At the same

time, domestically based labourers reap none of the advantages enjoyed by their colleagues in regular employment: they have the protection neither of unemployment insurance nor of retirement pensions nor of overtime pay nor of statutory holidays nor of paid vacations....

A union official declares:

"that domestic labour may well be considered a species of servitude or slavery, and that mothers especially are a prey to this form of exploitation because they want to secure additional income for their families."

As things are at present, there exists no way of controlling this type of labour. Despite the absence of legislation, government decree prohibits the domestic system of production in the following sectors of the garment industry: furs, shirt-making, men's wear (except sportswear), and ladies' coats. None of the other sectors of the industry has any government order in force restricting or forbidding the use of domestic labour. Unions of garment workers affiliated with both the Q.F.L. and the C.N.T.U. have joined in asking the Government to prohibit categorically this type of employment. The accounts which follow will help to place the problem in its proper perspective and to show the attitudes of unionized labour towards it.

The experience of a technical advisor
of the Federation of Garment Workers

Increase of work done at home

"There has always been a certain amount of manufacturing work carried out in the home. But for some time, the use made of this source of labour has shown a tendency to increase as salaries paid to regular workers have risen and working conditions improved. Naturally, employers prefer to hand over increasingly large proportions of the work to domestic workers whose wages have not changed. Working conditions have remained the same in the home for there is no control to bring about any improvement. Even in the face of minimum hourly wage legislation, the employer can get away with paying 5¢ per hour for home workers."

Advantages for employers

"Frequently, employers make their home workers do their work for next to nothing. They make deductions from their wages and they sell them machinery and accessories at outrageously high prices. For example, an employer may sell to a home worker an old sewing machine worth, probably, \$25 for \$300, withholding a certain percentage of the girl's weekly wage to pay for the machine. You can imagine that this, in effect, means that the home worker gets practically nothing for the work that she does. There are numerous employers who have no manufacturing establishments at all, beyond what is called a 'paving room'. They may have a cutting room in Montreal; every day, a group of people from outside the city take masses of cut goods and distribute them among the home workers. There are also individuals based outside Montreal who have 10, 15 or 20 employees come every day to their premises to pick up material to be sewn. There are all kinds of combinations. There are people who make their living that way, contractors supplied by the manufacturers with half-finished products and distributing them among home workers."

Working conditions of home workers

"I would estimate that a home worker is paid approximately one half of what a regular salaried worker earns in the industry. Evidently, there is no question of paid vacations or statutory holidays. No question of compensation if the sewing machine should break down. In the shops, you have all this. If the machines don't work properly, the employees are paid while the repairs are being effected. At home, there are no fringe benefits, no social security, health insurance or pension fund. In industry, there are all these benefits."

Why women accept these conditions

"These are people who must earn money, who cannot leave their homes and who, consequently, are at the mercy of any employer -- the first employer who chances along to offer them work. The women accept this work because they really need the money. Not for frivolities, that is certain. Of course, the more desperate their need, the more willing they are to accept the employer's conditions. If the contractor is not satisfied, he can threaten them; if they complain that the work does not pay enough, he can tell them: 'All right, I'm not giving you any more'. This usually disposes of all complaints pretty quickly."

Attitude of unionized workers

"In the glove-making industry, there was a seven week strike recently on this very issue. The men really went along with it, I can assure you. As salaries have increased in the glove industry, the amount of work has proportionately diminished, with more and more of it farmed out to home workers. Consequently, the men have as great an interest as the women in the problem, because they might very well find themselves faced with the identical situation. In Victoriaville, a large garment making centre, there has been a tremendous campaign waged by union organizers in order to sensitize public opinion to the unjust exploitation of home workers. On the other hand, a number of municipal counselors have come out against the campaign, agitating against the abolition of home work on account of the poor mothers who must ... so on and so forth ... the usual argument: that every one is going to lose his job because of this. Personally, I don't think that it is up to the industry to subsidize those in financially difficult positions. It's up to the Government to come to their help, with social welfare measures."

"As things now stand in the garment industry, a contract has just been signed with all employers in the glove-making business; we have demanded the abolition of home work. It is already three months since an amendment to that effect was submitted to the Government and so far we have had no response. Normally, the Government passes amendments which result from collective bargaining between employers and employees. In the present case, it is obviously our request for a decree regulating the entire garment industry that has held up the amendment. The government does not dare make its views known lest it may lose votes."

Concerted action by labour organizations

"The two labour organizations are putting whatever pressures they can on government as well as on public opinion to obtain the legal prohibition of home work. This is a serious affair because I am convinced that unless something is done about it in the garment industry, it will simply disappear in the Province of Quebec. The work is going to be done in private homes where there exists no possibility of wage control or unemployment insurance. Home workers very often pay no income tax at all and make no contribution to any form of social security. It is proving absolutely impossible to control this form of work. Various countries, including the United States, have tried and have failed. Every basement, every kitchen, every home is a potential workshop. How are you going to follow all this? It is up to the Government to come up with a new legal solution. We are faced here with the worst form of exploitation, because employees are totally at the mercy of the contractors who furnish them with work."

Is there no means of protecting home workers?

"First of all, it is impossible to keep a check on the hours of work because each home worker can work as much as she wants. You could, I suppose, compute allowances for statutory holidays and paid vacations on the basis of fixed percentages, but this, once again, does not lend itself to any control. It is altogether impossible to protect the home worker in the present context."

Home workers are not themselves conscious of the degree of exploitation to which they are subject or of the hardship that their employment causes for the regular labour force in the workshops. They are victims of employment at cut-rate salaries for the benefit of employers. There can be no doubt that women accept work under these adverse conditions only because of pressing financial need.

What will become of these women?

One of two things will happen. Either the Government decides to abolish work done at home, in which case these women will be deprived even of their meager but essential earnings, or the status quo will remain, with the consequence that their present exploitation will be perpetuated and the interests of the regular labour force injured.

Unionized workers, for their own part, are determined to spare no effort and press relentlessly for a change.

CHAPTER 2

MARRIED WOMEN IN EMPLOYMENT

More than one-half of ^{1/}the female labour force in our times consists of married women. So widespread is their employment in every occupational sector that no male worker can ignore their presence, regardless of his field of employment or particular competence. Sooner or later, whether at home or at work, he is bound to be confronted with the problem of married women working.

How do unionized workers react to this situation? Have they the same attitude, say, to the employment of married women in general, or of their own wives, or of their fellow-workers?

To what extent is unionized labour opposed to or in favour of the employment of married women? How do they justify their attitudes?

Is there a discrepancy between personal reactions and collective attitudes? On the one hand, the unionized worker inherits a certain determinate ideology according to which women are little better than chattels or possessions, beings apart from others, whose roles are confined to the home; on the other, he is faced with large numbers of women in remunerative employment whose rights must be protected. Clearly, there are contrary forces at work here.

Is the unionized worker really torn between his traditional attitudes and prejudices, on the one hand, and his sense of loyalty to the principles of unionism?

TABLE VI

SAMPLE

	<u>Respondents</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Married unionized workers	425	82.7%
Married unionized workers with wives in employment	115	22.7%
Unionized workers with female colleagues	277	53.9%
Unionized workers with married female colleagues	120	23.3%

The majority (82.7 per cent) of those responding to our questions on the problems of married women at work were married.

^{1/}Cf. Appendix -- Facts and data - The female labour force.

Approximately one-half of their number worked in company with women, 23.3 per cent of whom were married. Moreover, 22.7 per cent of our sample population declared that their wives were in remunerative employment. It is worth noting that the workers constituting our sample represented, therefore, a fair cross-section of the population at large, since the statistical data applying to them corresponded to those of the general working population.

HOW DID THE UNIONIZED WORKERS
INTERVIEWED RESPOND TO OUR QUESTIONS
CONCERNING THE EMPLOYMENT OF MARRIED WOMEN?

It is worth recalling the explanations provided at the beginning of this chapter in justification of the two types of questions included in our questionnaire.

- Question numbers 12 to 19 dealt with the general question of married women at work and with that of women as colleagues in employment, while
- Question numbers 25 to 30 dealt with the situation of wives in employment.

The analysis of the data collected was conducted separately under these two groups.

(The reader is referred to the table provided in the Appendix outlining the totality of answers received.)

Why, according to the unionized worker,
do married women take employment?

TABLE VII

TABLE BASED ON A COMPARISON OF GIVEN MOTIVES

<u>Reasons for working:</u>	<u>Female fellow-workers</u>	<u>Wives</u>
<u>1</u> - to supplement the budget	30.5%	18.1%
<u>2</u> - to become emancipated	3.3%	2.3%
<u>3</u> - for reasons of preference	2.1%	3.7%

TABLE VIII

ATTITUDES TO MARRIED WOMEN WORKING, CLASSIFIED
ACCORDING TO WHETHER THEY HAVE CHILDREN OR NOT

ARE YOU IN FAVOUR OF WOMEN WORKING
AFTER THEIR MARRIAGE IF

		YES	NO
<u>1</u>	- they have no children	73.7%	23.5%
<u>2</u>	- they have young children	8.6%	85.2%
<u>3</u>	- they have school-age children	22.4%	71.2%

TABLE IX

ATTITUDES FAVOURING DOMESTIC ROLES FOR WOMEN

		<u>Prefer that women remain at home</u>	<u>Prefer that higher salaries be nego- tiated for the male worker</u>
<u>1</u>	- yes	56.8%	61.1%
<u>2</u>	- no	6.8%	9.7%
<u>3</u>	- undecided	4.9%	6.8%

NEED JUSTIFIES WORK

Unionized workers are willing to concede that a married woman may have to work for reasons of economic necessity and that, this being the case, she is justified in taking employment. This, however, is the only circumstance which justifies, in the majority's view, the employment of married women.

A unionized worker in a (industrial)
manufacturing firm:

"Needless to say, if the husband is not working, if the husband does not make enough to supply the needs of his family, I have no objection to his wife taking a job."

Even if it is not a case of dire necessity, most unionized workers are willing to tolerate the employment of married women before they have had their first child, in order to "help the setting up of their households", "to start off decently in their new homes", "to pay off debts", or "to buy an automobile". It is admitted that more and more young couples start off with both husbands and wives working, but ... and there is a BUT ... if the wives work, this may jeopardize or postpone the founding

of the family.

A trade-union official:

"To be sure, girls today continue working for five or six years after they are married, in order to establish their homes on a firmer footing, but what happens is that in fact this very often results in their not raising a family."

BUT WOMAN'S PLACE IS
IN THE HOME

Even if unionized workers are willing to recognize that married women may have to work for pressing economic reasons, they do so grudgingly. Clearly, for them the arrangement is far from ideal. On the contrary, it is a deplorable one that individual workers certainly would not wish to involve "their wives" in. Man's place is to go to work; woman's, to stay at home. This, at any rate, is the order of things that the workers interviewed wished to see established in their own homes.

"It's always a different matter when it's your own wife. All the boys at work feel the same way about it as I do."

"Throughout human history, since the beginning of society, man had the task of being the bread-winner of his family while woman remained at home to look after the children and the household. We cannot destroy these traditions within the space of one generation. That will take a good bit of time to accomplish, for these traditions are deeply rooted."

Unionized workers cannot understand why women should wish to take employment for reasons other than a pressing financial need. Motives such as personal choice, self-fulfillment and a desire for independence leave them perplexed. Why, the workers ask themselves, should women voluntarily take on themselves the burdens of employment when a thoroughly pleasant mode of living awaits them at home?

Testimony of a technical adviser
and strike organizer, with 22
years of union experience

"Personally, I have no objection to a woman going out to work after she is married any more than I have to her staying at home. But I am opposed to her taking a job if she has young children and if, in order to be free to

accept employment, she must put them into the care of a nursery or kindergarten. I tend to feel that the domestic life is probably quite an agreeable one to women; in such a situation they are free to improve themselves without having to take on the task of working from morning till night, of rushing home to prepare meals and to make lunch, and so forth. I think that women have an exceptionally important role to play in the home, a role that exacts devotion and a great measure of self-sacrifice on their part. Personally, I believe that, if they had a choice, working women would probably prefer to stay home."

Even when it comes to their own wives, workers seem unable to recognize the existence of any other motive for working than the economic. Personal well-being, a sense of mental balance and individual taste are motives recognized by no more than two, three and four per cent of those interviewed.

WORKERS FACE TO FACE WITH FEMALE INDUSTRIAL EMPLOYEES

Veteran unionists, who have spent their lives as ardent defenders of workers' rights, find themselves in strong opposition to the employment of female workers in industry. The reason for this opposition (one learns with little difficulty in talking with them) is that they consider industrial work hard, unpleasant, dirty -- altogether a disagreeable life that they would wish to spare their own wives.

A unionized worker, with 31 years of union experience, in an industrial plant
employing a 40 per cent female labour force:

"I continue to be opposed to outside employment for married women. The fundamental, deep-seated reason for my opposition is an emotional one. I have a great deal of respect for women, and it seems to me that today we are exposing women to an excessively hard life. Perhaps I am being idealistic but I suppose I idealize women. I cannot conceive them as the equals of men, dressed in overalls, greasy all over. I simply cannot picture them in this way."

A career union leader in the
Eastern Townships:

"There are those who are opposed to the idea of married women working as a matter of principle. For my own part,

I do not necessarily subscribe to such an extreme position. One has to recognize that the situation exists. Personally, I would not allow my own wife to work. It is a question of pride. I have never allowed her to work -- that was a resolution I took when I got married."

A unionist in the textile industry:

"Have you ever noticed the hands of women who work in industry? Have you ever noticed that they were not feminine hands?"

It is to be noted that unionists tend generally to differentiate between industrial work and work done in other employment sectors by women. Factory work still has not lost its Dickensian associations of the sweatshop, associations dating back to the Industrial Revolution when factories were "dark Satanic mills" devouring women and children and young girls by the thousands. Evidently, working conditions in industry have improved immensely since the mid nineteenth century, but the attitude that industrial work for women is brutalizing lingers still. Curiously enough, industrial workers themselves are proud of their involvement in the productive process in factories; yet none of them would wish to see his daughter employed in an industrial plant. They would prefer to have them find employment in the plant office, as typists or telephone operators, earning a lower salary than they would be capable of earning in the plant itself doing piecework and getting the efficiency bonus.

Work done by professionally trained women is idealized by unionized manual labourers. They consider the professional woman free from economic constraint, free (so they think) to hire domestic help or to leave their employment at will. At the same time, workers show themselves very unsympathetic to women who "hand their children over to strangers to raise".

It is a great source of pride for factory workers that their wives are not obliged to work, that they are capable of supporting them at home. Although workers can understand that married women may have to work in order to make ends meet, they admit no other legitimate reason for allowing them to do so.

A MENTALITY PARTICULARLY
PERSISTENT IN CERTAIN REGIONS

To judge from the testimony of union leaders, this mentality is particularly persistent in certain regions.

"You will note that there are certain areas where old-fashioned conceptions are still prevalent, such as, for example, Quebec City. The men think that their wives ought to stay home. As a result of this attitude, women are not fully recognized as employable. In two of our plants, in Quebec, where married women had been excluded from employment, we had an extremely difficult time changing this mentality. It was, above all, the workers that objected."

"I am emphatically against companies that believe that married women have no right to work. I find this attitude absurd and unacceptable. In Quebec City, employers are opposed to hiring married women. When asked the reason for their opposition they simply reply that it is their private opinion."

"A WOMAN SHOULD RAISE HER OWN
CHILDREN RATHER THAN ENTRUST
THEIR UPBRINGING TO STRANGERS"

From the moment that the question of children is raised, unionized workers become adamant in their opposition to outside remunerative employment for women. No less than 85.2 per cent of those questioned categorically disapproved of the employment of women with young children; indeed, one might expect no other reaction. But 71.2 per cent expressed disapproval even when the children were of school age. In other words, workers overwhelmingly prefer to see women confined to a domestic role. Here is how they explain this preference ...

A white-collar worker:

"I have no objection to married women working, but I have the strongest reservations when it is a matter of women with young children taking employment. I consider it little less than criminal of a mother to leave her child regularly from the time that it is born until it is three years old. Such treatment leaves serious scars, to such an extent that the psychiatric wards of our hospitals are full of children and adolescents suffering from emotional disturbances of one sort or another, on account of having been neglected in their infancy."

A union executive in the service sector,
with 14 years of union experience:

"I believe that a woman who wishes to take a job should be free to do so. Obviously, there are certain qualifications

and conditions that I would mention, however. I do not think that it is proper for a woman to seek employment if she has other obligations. Among other things, there is the role that she accepts when she marries -- a role that can lead to motherhood. Every woman should be made aware that she has obligations to the children she brings into the world. If there is a choice to be made, certainly it will not be between working in order to please herself or caring for her children. First and foremost, she must fulfil her social role as a mother, a role that she has accepted."

A manual worker:

"I think that a woman's place is in the home, at least as long as her children are young. Once they are of a certain age, I personally see no objection to her going out to work. I think there is no one that can take a mother's place in bringing up children when they are young. You see, in industry, a woman has no voice in organizing her work schedule. It is organized for her by the manufacturer, her employer. It might be easier for professional women to fit their schedules to their private lives, but for the industrial worker it is hard."

A professional union executive:

"I believe that very young children need to have their mothers at home, since as a rule the fathers are at work. Once children are of school age, I see nothing to stop a woman from going to work."

The same basic attitude characterizes all those interviewed -- professional and industrial workers, union executives and technical advisors. The place of woman, they maintain, is in the home. Her social responsibility is, primarily, to care for and to bring up her children.

IS IT WORTHWHILE FOR A MOTHER
TO TAKE OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT?

Unionized workers recognize that a mother may be obliged by pressing financial need to take outside employment, but many express doubts as to the economic validity of her doing so.

TABLE X

19. - IS IT WORTHWHILE FOR A MARRIED
WOMAN TO WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME?

<u>1</u>	- yes	45.1%
<u>2</u>	- no	28.4%
<u>3</u>	- undecided	19.5%

Statements:

Electrical industry:

"It may cost a woman as much to hire a baby-sitter or nurse to look after her children as she is likely to make in her job: why, it may run her \$20 to \$25 per week. Right there, one third of her salary has been used up. In fact, for people working in industry, I cannot see how they can afford to pay a baby-sitter or nurse at all."

Baking and confectionery industry:

"The wages would have to be very high to make working financially worthwhile for a married woman. If she considers the cost of hiring a nurse, the reduction in her husband's tax exemption and the additional expenses incurred for clothes and transportation, she will probably find that it just isn't worth it."

A career unionist:

"Among the working class, women do not have the expense of charwomen, baby-sitters or nurses, or of private nurseries or kindergartens. They rely on neighbours to look after their children while they are at work, or else a husband and wife may work different shifts. Then, again, many have parents, grandparents, aunts or other relatives to look after the children while they themselves are away from home. The situation is not at all the same as it is in the middle-class milieu."

HIGHER WAGES FOR WORKERS

Since the place of women is in the home, what measures ought to be taken to enable them to stay there? Of the workers

who replied to our questionnaire, 61.1 per cent felt that their unions ought to start negotiations for higher salaries for male workers. Curiously, however, both the workers and union officials personally interviewed did not appear to share this opinion; and, in comparing answers received, we noted a considerable divergence of opinion between those interviewed and those questioned by means of our questionnaire. According to the former, the married woman will not leave her employment simply because her husband is earning more money than presently.

"I am under the impression that even if salaries were raised, there would be many men who would allow their wives to hold down a job. There is no limit to human wishes. With the additional income earned by the wife, a family might further raise its standard of living. The wants would certainly keep pace with the means."

"It would be preferable if workers' salaries were increased, but it is utopian to imagine that, for all that, women would remain at home."

"I am greatly in favour of salaries based on the family's needs, as such, so as to put an end to the exploitation of workers....A man ought to make enough money to support his family. Once this was achieved, there would be no further need for his wife to go out and work; if she decided to work, she would do so because she chose to. Let us assume that in this way the wife would be able to afford a few luxuries for herself -- there is no reason why she should not; after all, we are not living under a communistic system. The point is, she wouldn't be obliged to work. Whether she does or not is the business of the couple to decide."

When the question is pursued to sufficient length, one discovers that the attitudes of union leaders are not, in the final analysis, markedly different from those of the workers. The only essential difference is that the former are conscious that the increasing involvement of women in the labour market in Quebec Province is an irreversible trend. Professional unionists concur with rank-and-file members, however, in wishing to remain the principal providers, the chief bread-winners, of their families. This, apparently, is an accepted condition of virility in the society in which we live, and generally recognized as such by all people. In a sense, the workers' insistence on this condition is their way of assuring their own membership in the (male) community.

The return of married women to the labour market

A new pattern has emerged in late years on the labour market: the return to employment of married women after having brought up their children. These women very often return to work after ten, fifteen years of absence, enriched by their experience and maturity as mothers but frequently finding themselves out of line with the needs of the labour market. Needless to say, the return of this population of married women to jobs has not passed unnoticed by the workers, who view their arrival with mixed feelings.

TABLE XI

ONCE HER CHILDREN ARE GROWN UP,
SHOULD A MARRIED WOMAN RETURN
TO THE LABOUR MARKET?

<u>1</u>	- yes	44.4%
<u>2</u>	- no	33.1%
<u>3</u>	- undecided	19.8%

Those undecided and those opposed to the idea of women returning to work constitute 52.9 per cent of the workers canvassed. Why, this majority seems to ask, should women wish to resume employment? Once freed from the burdens of motherhood, why would they willingly undergo the ordeal of work, obedience to work-schedules, submitting to a boss, and so forth? Why do they not, instead, enjoy their new-gained liberty, amusing themselves as they might and using their time as they wish, the way the men intend to do on their retirement?

Numerous workers admit that, without children to look after and to bring up, women tend to find life at home tedious and uninteresting. They can understand that women should feel the need for active involvement, for getting out of the house. But they show far more sympathy for the idea of hobbies, sports or volunteer charitable work as pastimes for women than for remunerative employment. A worker can countenance (in fact, may welcome) the idea of his wife taking courses: it impresses his friends at work, without doing harm to his all-important male image. Nevertheless, a new trend in this direction is now developing.

In industrial manufacture:

"I can readily accept the idea of a woman going back to work at a certain age -- say, at the age of thirty or thirty-five. Her whole family, after all, leaves in the morning for work or school. I think that, in these circumstances, it is bad for a woman to remain at home with nothing to do -- unless, of course, she has some useful interest to pursue. If she remains at home, the country simply loses a potential worker. This, in effect, is what it amounts to -- the loss of working potential."

It is perhaps in the sector of education, however, that we find the best example and most convincing evidence of what we have affirmed earlier in this chapter. Women returning to employment after a number of years of absence constitute a stable and conscientious labour force following an initial period of adjustment. This is confirmed by the opinions of the regular workers themselves with specific reference both to absenteeism and to participation in union activities, as we shall have occasion to see later in this study.

In the public school system:

"Usually, a female teacher who joins the profession works for one to five years before she marries and leaves teaching. After having two or three children, she may return to work, and it is at this point that she really becomes a career teacher. It may seem curious, but in this profession the stable element is the married woman. For one thing, she comes back with a good deal of practical knowledge of children, gained from a personal experience of motherhood; for another, she has added maturity. Married women of this category are usually the best educators. There is one thing that they often complain about, however: it is that they feel a little bit lost after five or six years away from teaching, and consider themselves in need of some re-training."

A NEW TYPE OF MAN

Several times in our interviews, we discerned a new tone among the workers we questioned, a tone which, though representing only the views of a small and rather timid minority, nonetheless marked a considerable departure from the opinions held by the large mass of workers. We are referring here to the 8.5 per cent of our respondents who, in answering question 12, affirmed that they had no objection to a woman working even if she had young children.

"Not only am I in favour of women working after they are married, but I believe that, for a large number of women, family life is a source of frustration. I am dead against the existing order of things. It is no more the exclusive duty of a woman than of a man to look after the household. I feel that women should have the same opportunities as men to have a career, and this is so even when women have young dependent children. Nature cannot be changed, but society in general and employers in particular ought to provide women with a chance to have children. Even new means for raising them might be provided, for it is not at all certain that the family is the best means of rearing children. I personally know of several children who might have grown up to be more successful if they had been brought up by people other than their parents, say, by real educators. We should not allow marriage to terminate the development of women as individuals in their own right. Women have as much right as men to pursuing careers. Besides, with the technological evolution of our society, women will be called upon more and more to play an important role. The type of society towards which we are tending is a society of services -- that is to say, the productive sector of our economy, as we know it, is going to be transformed to provide more and more services. The trend of development during the last quarter century has clearly been in this direction. This means that women could, in effect, make themselves very useful careers in the domain of services -- perhaps even more so than men. As our educational system develops and as progress is made in other areas as well, it will become increasingly difficult to keep women in the home and to satisfy them with the traditional roles of motherhood and child-rearing. In my opinion, this is completely obsolete."

"I wonder whether this problem is particular to Quebec Province, or whether it is world-wide. When a woman marries, she is allowed to have only one centre of interest: her family. As for the husband, he retains two: his family and his work. Our families may be the most important things in our lives but, as far as the realities of our daily routine are concerned, the number of hours that we devote to work very often exceeds the number we devote to our families. I consider this to be the normal thing. But there is, nevertheless, a fundamental difference here between the sexes. I am of the opinion that if a woman, when she married, had also two centres of interest, her family, on the one hand, and her work, on the other, this would make for a much happier and much more satisfactory relationship between the marriage partners."

WOMEN MAY CHOOSE TO WORK, WHEREAS
MEN HAVE NO CHOICE

It is surprising that none of the workers and union officials interviewed, not even those generally in favour of women working, considered the salaries paid to women as other than extra or additional income.

For their own part, married women themselves adopt the terms of this definition of their work role. Hence emerges a mentality that views the employment of women as at best transitory and their salaries as mere additional income.

Approaching the problem in this perspective, unionized workers quite naturally stress, above all, the necessity of allowing women freedom of choice in the matter of working. Women, they contend, should not be compelled by economic necessity to take employment outside the home. They should be free to choose between remunerative employment and domestic work. At the same time, it is tacitly accepted that men are the principal bread-winners of their families. But why should a man not have the choice that a woman obviously has? Why might he not be more fitted to do housework and to raise the children? A career union leader speaks of the problem in these terms:

"I personally favour leaving women at liberty to choose between working and not working. I do not advocate that, as a matter of principle, women ought to take outside employment. I can see no objection to a father looking after the children at home, if he has the necessary aptitude and wish to do so and if his wife does not. There is no reason why a woman might not go to work to support the family and a man might not stay home to raise his children. It is purely a matter of personal choice for the individuals concerned to resolve. I do think that very young children should have a parent present with them, whichever of the two parents chooses to stay with them."

When male workers speak of women in employment, they never do so in the same terms as they do of men. There is always an implication that these women are out of their element, that they are somehow intruding upon a role not properly theirs. Indeed, the attitude of the male worker to the employed married woman is comparable to that of parents to an unwanted child. Now the child has come, they take care of him, they provide for him and finally they accept him.

MATERNITY LEAVE

Despite their prejudices against female employment, unionized workers are on the whole in favour of extending certain special benefits to women employees. One of the protective measures that unions have bargained for over the years is maternity leave.

TABLE XII

43. - MATERNITY CLAUSE:
IS THERE A MATERNITY CLAUSE
INCLUDED IN YOUR COLLECTIVE
LABOUR AGREEMENT?

<u>1</u>	- yes	38.3%
<u>2</u>	- no	28.0%
<u>3</u>	- not yet	11.9%
<u>4</u>	- unnecessary	4.7%

When workers answer that maternity clauses are not included in their labour agreements or are unnecessary, this usually means that their particular work sector employs few or no women.

It may be affirmed as a general rule that in the Province of Quebec much of the maternity protection enjoyed by female workers has been secured through the efforts (sometimes, the sustained efforts) of the labour movement. Chief among these benefits is maternity leave. Unionized labour thus recognizes not only the right of women employees to maternity but also their right to a measure of protection as workers. How did the labour unions interpret this right? What practical application do they give it in the case of the pregnant female worker?

TABLE XIII

IN YOUR OPINION, THE PREGNANT
FEMALE EMPLOYEE HAS A RIGHT TO

		<u>40. paid mater- nity leave</u>	<u>42a.) regain her position</u>	<u>42b.) main- tain her job senior- ity</u>
<u>1</u>	- yes	65.6%	85.0%	85.4%
<u>2</u>	- no	18.9%	8.6%	6.4%
<u>3</u>	- undecided	11.9%	-	-

19 persons failed to answer question 40

38 persons failed to answer question 42

Almost all workers consulted replied to this part of our questionnaire, even if maternity benefit clauses are by no means universal to labour agreements (see Table XII).

Admittedly, a minor proportion of those questioned refused to recognize any special right to protection in the case of pregnant female workers. The argument of this minority may be summarized in the following terms: if a married woman wishes to work let her accept the same working conditions as the men do, and let her look after her own problems. Clearly, unionism has not been altogether successful in disposing of the old prejudice that women are intruders in the labour market, a domain belonging properly exclusively to the male sex.

"Married women", one worker remarked on the reverse side of the questionnaire, "work either for reasons of economic necessity or for reasons of personal distraction. Either way, they have no legitimate claim to any special right, beyond being paid for the work that they do."

The remaining majority of workers recognize that the pregnant female worker has certain specific rights: to retain her job seniority (85.4 per cent), to have the assurance of being rehired (85 per cent). A somewhat smaller proportion feel that she has the right to paid maternity leave (65.6 per cent). This order of percentages represents the order of the concessions that have been gained by unions.

Generally speaking, the concessions obtained by the labour unions have put an end to the practice of laying off pregnant female workers and have secured recognition of their right to resume employment without forfeiting their seniority. One fact needs, however, to be noted in this connection: these small victories have been gained primarily in manufacturing firms employing relatively high proportions of women and paying traditionally low wages, such as the textile, garment and food industries. These industries have, we may moreover point out, a long history of unionism. The following are a few explanations and comments made by union officials in these manufacturing sectors:

Cardboard box manufacture:

"Seniority is the subject of one of the clauses in our labour agreement, but not paid maternity leave. We are in a secondary manufacturing industry where bargaining is always extremely difficult. There are so many improvements to bargain for that there are bound to remain certain ones we still have not touched on."

Textile industry:

"Maternity leave? No, you could certainly not say that you find clauses guaranteeing this privilege in many of our collective agreements. Certain contracts stipulate that a woman may absent herself from work for maternity reasons without losing her seniority status..."

A study of some thirty collective agreements governing labour relations in the particular industrial sectors previously mentioned has revealed not a single instance wherein employees enjoyed any specific protection in maternity cases. The only stipulations concerning absences for reasons of childbirth are contained under articles governing sick leave, childbirth being obviously equated with illness.

By way of example, let us examine agreements in force in the Federation of Textile Workers.

There are approximately 35 collective labour agreements included in our survey, some of them the result of negotiations conducted by individual unions and employers, and others applying to several groups of unions and employers. With only three exceptions, none of the labour contracts examined make any specific mention of maternity leave as such. Maternity is considered, for purposes of the agreements, as sickness. Female workers who stay away from work for reason of pregnancy have only the protection

provided by clauses stipulating a certain number of sick days.

Those few labour agreements in the textile industry that do contain a specific clause dealing with maternity cases give no protection in addition to that provided by clauses on sick leave; they merely stipulate the permitted period of absence. Such, for example, is the case with the contract of the Drummondville Textile Workers' Union, which allows a maximum of five months' absence and specifies that returning female workers shall have a right to their seniority status.

How are we to account for the fact that so few collective labour agreements contain specific maternity clauses? One negotiator has explained the lack in these terms:

"The demands contained in our collective agreements are determined by the general meeting of rank-and-file members in each plant. At present, we have already in hand the demands that will be presented at our next contract negotiations. Now, we have had no request to include a maternity leave clause in any of our 35 work agreements."

Are the women afraid of being considered especially privileged, or are they merely unconscious of their rights?

In other employment sectors, notably among office workers, municipal employees, the Canadian Federation of Public Service Employees, the Union of Professional Engineers of the City of Montreal, and so forth, we find certain specific stipulations concerning maternity cases: leave without pay, with certain limitations on the maximum period of the leave.

The research branch of the Department of Labour of the Province of Quebec has furnished us the following information in corroboration of our own findings.

"In 1965-66, we conducted a sample survey of 302 collective labour agreements and found that 68 of them contained clauses relative to maternity leave. None of these clauses stipulated the payment of any wages during the period of leave, but all permitted female workers to have their accumulated sick leave days in addition to their maternity leave."

MATERNITY LEAVE CLAUSES: SOME EXAMPLES

When a collective labour agreement contains a specific clause dealing with maternity, the latter is usually modelled

upon a single pattern, so that one finds considerable resemblance between clauses used in various employment sectors. Two examples follow:

National union of Laval office employees

Article 26. - MATERNITY LEAVE

Pregnant female employees (except those in probationary or part time employment) shall take an unremunerated maternity leave at the latest at the commencement of their seventh (7th) month of pregnancy, or at any date prior to this time fixed by the municipal physician. In the course of the six (6) weeks following delivery, the municipal physician shall fix the date of such employees' return to work. Any employee who does not return on the date fixed by the municipal physician, or within a maximum delay of sixty (60) calendar days from that date, will be dismissed.

Collective agreement: Le Devoir - La Patrie

Next agreement: La Presse:

The following clause makes allowance for maternity leave with pay. It represents the objective aimed for by several labour unions which consider it as one of the most progressive in the Province.

Article 16.08 - All female employees that are expectant shall have the right to one month's maternity leave with pay, provided that they will have been in the employ of the company for one (1) year.

In the event of medical complications arising the provisions contained in paragraphs 16.01 to 16.07 alone shall apply.

Furthermore, the Company shall, on demand, give all expectant female employees at least three months' maternity leave without pay, in addition to the one month's leave with pay stipulated above. This provision does not preclude the possibility of a longer period of leave being agreed upon between employees and the Company.

MATERNITY LEAVE WITHOUT LOSS OF WAGES

Even though 65.6 per cent of the workers questioned in our survey are of the opinion that pregnant female employees should have maternity leave with pay, no such provision exists in the majority of collective labour agreements. One might add that those few unionists that have managed to incorporate in their labour agreements clauses granting maternity leave with pay are regarded by their professional colleagues as constituting the forefront of the feminist movement. The clause is so infrequently part of collective agreements and so difficult to obtain that some union officials expressed bland scepticism at the possibility of having it included in their respective labour contracts.

In the electrical industry:

"Maternity leave with pay? The employees would never stand for it. After all, we are still not living in a socialist state."

In the tobacco industry:

"With pay? I think we will have to wait a bit before we see that."

In the garment industry:

"Looking into the immediate future, say, the next ten years, I can see no prospect of this becoming reality."

In the electronic industry:

"The stage we are presently working on is to have salaries paid to pregnant employees for a certain time during those employees' absence. Even this is difficult to get. I am not confident that we can ever have more than this."

THE TERM "REMUNERATED" LENDS ITSELF TO CONFUSION

In certain businesses, expectant female employees are free to avail themselves of their accumulated sick leave days and/or their health insurance benefits. Yet, in the strict sense of the term, these women have no salary, no remuneration; they are simply drawing against their sick leave credit, so to speak.

This kind of arrangement is far from satisfactory, as one ranking union official commented to us:

"Some of our female members have had children and have been obliged in such cases to take a month or two off from work. Their absences were debited against their sick leave allowances. This is a very unjust practice since, if they should ever actually fall sick, they would have no sick leave left."

In the confectionery industry:

"A study of the coverage provided by insurance companies shows that paying expectant women is one of the things the companies try very hard to get out of. We have in the past had, and still have in some factories, wage indemnities paid to pregnant women during the last six weeks of pregnancy and for the first six weeks after delivery. The insurance companies want to do away with all that."

In hospital services:

"The expectant female employee is free to use her sick leave days, and this in effect means receiving her full salary for a certain number of days, depending on the length of her service with the employer. After that, if she participates in a group insurance plan, she can obviously avail herself of whatever benefits are provided in her case, and this will secure her a certain income during her absence."

The benefits granted under health insurance group plans may serve to explain why the term 'remunerated' lends itself to so much confusion. On the whole, protection against loss of income for expectant female workers is limited to such benefits. They are, furthermore, in some ways penalized by having their maternity leave debited against their regular sick leave allowance, an allowance enjoyed as a matter of course by all workers.

If the expectant working woman is unmarried, she runs a fair risk of receiving no protection whatsoever. A survey of existing maternity clauses in labour agreements reveals that, in effect, certain of them extend protection only to 'married' women. It already amounts to a minor triumph when a union, often after many hours of arduous negotiation, succeeds in persuading employers to delete the restrictive term 'married' from maternity clauses. Is the reluctance of management in

this regard morally motivated or is it based on economic considerations? Both, possibly. While the present study was being completed, the workers of a commercial enterprise brought the following incident to our notice:

"We have just signed our last collective labour agreement. Because of the refusal of management to drop the term 'married' from the maternity leave clause, we were obliged to drop the clause altogether. In fact, this would have set us back a good ten years. But we preferred dropping the entire clause and to resume the battle at our next collective bargaining negotiation."

All things considered, the expectant female worker enjoys a degree of protection in the Province of Quebec --a degree of protection that has been earned for her often with great difficulty, by her fellow unionized workers. But to what extent are union members prepared to back up their demands for maternity benefits?

TABLE XIV

41. - WOULD YOU BE PREPARED TO GO ON
STRIKE IN ORDER TO SECURE FOR
FEMALE WORKERS MATERNITY LEAVE
WITHOUT LOSS OF INCOME?

<u>1</u>	- yes	32.1%
<u>2</u>	- no	39.7%
<u>3</u>	- undecided	22.2%

When the possibility of going on strike in order to secure maternity leave for their female colleagues is mentioned to workers, one encounters considerable hesitation. They believe in the theoretical justice of this demand, but appear to recoil from the prospect of backing it up by strike action... Here are some testimonials:

A career union official in
hospital services:

"To be quite frank, I doubt if you could involve the great mass of workers in a strike on an issue such as that, because I feel few are willing to go all the way about something that most of them consider somewhat marginal. This is not to say that they would not be willing to strike, if the questions at stake were different, or more in the general interest."

The director of a
union of professionals:

"I am under the impression that Quebec workers are not prepared to go on strike on such an issue, principally because they do not as yet fully accept the idea of married women working."

A union executive in
the metallurgical industry:

"I do not believe that a group of workers, which would normally be made up of about 35% men and about as many women, would go on strike simply for maternity leave. Such a demand might be incorporated with others into a more massive programme on the level of seniority or of marginal benefits. This way, it might have a chance, but otherwise, the likelihood of a group of workers going on strike in 1968 is not very great. I know that I would not like to be the technical adviser who had to convince them to do it..."

OPINIONS OF UNIONIZED WORKERS ON THE ATTITUDES OF WOMEN TO MATERNITY LEAVE

"Women wouldn't fight even for maternity leave."

Having declared their unwillingness to back up demands for paid maternity leave with strike action, unionized workers turn around to reproach their female colleagues for holding similar attitudes. "The women are equally responsible; they do not even claim their rights ... It was the men that first began campaigning for maternity protection for them..." It amounts to no exaggeration to say that all workers interviewed on this question were of the same opinion.

"We haven't yet had any demands presented to us by the women on that score."

It would seem that sometimes solidarity is lacking even among female employees when the insertion of a maternity leave clause is proposed by union leaders.

In an office workers union:

"I have found that among the older female staff members there is a kind of discrimination against, a lack of understanding and sympathy for, maternity leave without pay. To give you a blatant example: only two or three weeks ago,

I organized a series of meetings to prepare for our collective labour contract negotiations with a group. It was the oldest female employees who requested that maternity leave be granted only to married women, not to women as such. They wished to introduce a restriction, and it was the men who had to fight against it. The majority of working women of a certain age are spinsters. Naturally, there exists considerable jealousy between them and the younger ones who (the others claim) have different moral values from their own. This, anyway, is how I explain it to myself."

In the garment industry:

"Until very recently, the conditions laid down in our labour agreements were a bit uncivilized. A woman who got to be pregnant automatically forfeited her seniority rights. Her condition was not considered as a regular sickness. She was sent home. This practice, of course, illustrates the tendency of the industry not to hire married women. But in the last two years this situation has changed. The funny thing about it is that it was the women who were not altogether in agreement with the change. You know, the single girls simply cannot see themselves married one day and having a baby and finding themselves in the same predicament as the older married women employees. Besides, as far as the girls were concerned, every time a married woman left on account of pregnancy, it meant a promotion for them, a move up the ladder. We had a difficult time making the girls see this; as for the men, it made no difference for them one way or another."

Let us now attempt to summarize our findings concerning maternity protection for female employees. According to those interviewed, a woman should be entitled to regain her job after having her baby, and that without the loss of her seniority status. Maternity leave without loss of income is, however, definitely a thing of the distant future, since employers are not willing to accede to such demands. Rank-and-file union members, on the other hand, show no interest in backing up their demands for this benefit with strike action. In spite of this, they have every intention of pursuing the matter in their negotiations. They deplore the apathy of the female labour force in insisting upon their rights. (It would be interesting and instructive to compare in this regard the point of view of working women with that of the men, and to see how they would reply to the charges made against them by the male workers.)

MATERNITY PROTECTION:
A STATE RESPONSIBILITY

None of the unionized workers interviewed mentioned to us the existence of any protective measures for the benefit of pregnant female employees apart from maternity leave. Thus, a reduction in the number of hours of work or the alleviation of work tasks was not once noted as a possibility.

Be this as it may, certain union officials are apparently asking themselves whether defending women's rights to maternity is a matter for union intervention. According to some, the responsibility calls rather for government interference.

"I think that it is up to the state to intervene. Certainly, it isn't up to the garment industry, with its marginal profits. The economic context in which we work makes it impossible."

"Personally, I should think it would be more in the realm of legislation than in the realm of labour negotiation, because, once again, if you insist on securing for women too advantageous a status (one that will cost the employer too much), the result will be simply that employers will decide not to hire women. You can also have on hand a situation where a union, dominated by a male majority, will wish to negotiate all sorts of special benefits for the women simply because the men want to protect their own jobs and to eliminate female competition. The result of it all is that if the law imposed maternity leave as well as wage parity on employers, it might work -- but only if the law also obliged employers to hire a certain percentage of women. Now, obviously, during periods of overemployment, when there is a scarcity of workers to be had, employers will hire women even if it will cost them more to do so. But at times of underemployment, when there is a surplus feminine labour force available, he will hire men, since it will be cheaper for him to do so."

In the public school system:

"...If the government were to tell us: social security is the business of the unions to bargain for, then we would do it, without a doubt. But for my own part I would prefer to see the state take this sort of social legislation in hand and provide for remunerated maternity leave by law. It would be very useful, because a woman can lose two, three or perhaps four months' salary each time she

has a baby, and this does not encourage her to have four or five children. If childbearing is not considered a sickness or social nuisance, it should be subsidized. The help given could take the form either of legal provision or of other concrete measures to subsidize, in a very clear and precise way married women on the labour market. At the same time, I can tell you that we are aiming precisely towards such an objective in our collective labour agreements. I believe that if the government does nothing about this question within a year's time, we shall take it in hand ourselves. We shall make our demands known in no uncertain terms because, for us, motherhood is important, and so is keeping in the profession all the married women. They will render us very fine service and are a credit to their profession and to education."

NURSERIES

NURSERIES? WE HAVE NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT ...

Earlier in this report (cf., Table VIII, p. 55) we have seen how widespread among workers is the conviction that married women should remain at home with their children, even if the children are no longer in their infancy. Nevertheless, workers are compelled to admit that, if the mothers of young children must work, some arrangement must be made for looking after them in their parents' absence. Whether the children are left in the charge of neighbours, relatives, grandparents or friends, workers tend to feel that some makeshift of this sort is generally satisfactory (if indeed not ideal), for the children are not, at any rate, left with 'complete strangers'. It is not surprising, considering the limited choice of the solutions they find acceptable to the problem, that workers in general do not feel the need for nurseries.

The campaign currently being waged in the Province of Quebec and, in fact, throughout the country for the establishment of nurseries accordingly finds little sympathy among the workers. The possibility of this solution simply does not enter their minds. Indeed, it is enough to bring up the subject of nurseries in order to raise considerable suspicion in the minds of one's listeners. To put the matter succinctly, workers are neither for nor against nurseries: they have generally never considered the possibility of such institutions existing.

In the textile industry:

"The question has never been raised in our industry. We have heard about it being tried elsewhere, through the newspapers, but it has never been tried here.

A union organizer in the garment industry:

"There is obviously room for improvement in our labour contracts, particularly as regards the situation of married female workers. Something must be done to make life easier for them if we wish to have them continue working in the garment industry. In one of my reports to the Labour Congress, I have already brought up the question of nurseries. My report concerned collective agreements in effect in the garment industry in Europe: they contain clauses and provisions that we have never even thought of. The approach taken in North America has been somewhat different owing to different social customs, but if we want women to stay in the industry, we must certainly provide them with certain services not yet given: among others, with nurseries. In the event of a female worker's child falling ill, for example, provision should be made for her to take a few days off from work, since evidently a woman is better at nursing a child than her husband. All these things ought to be provided for, but, for the moment at least, we haven't come to these problems yet. The questions have never arisen in practical negotiations and are obviously not considered practicable in the present state of things. I recognize their importance and their reality, but the general rank-and-file of our membership does not seem to be aware of them as yet."

Among public school teachers, although no official position on the question of nurseries has been taken by the Alliance des professeurs, the issue is much debated. Unlike in other work sectors, in the public school system women are increasingly vocal in claiming their rights, as a union executive has told us. Let us, in this connection, cite a statement made to us at length bearing on this very issue and proposing a solution to the problem of nurseries which well deserves to be studied in depth.

Among public school teachers:

"I cannot give you an official answer on behalf of the Alliance with regard to the question of nurseries, but I can acquaint you at least with my own personal views. There are many female teachers in the present system who put their children into nurseries, even though, as many of them will tell you, there is something disturbingly impersonal about these institutions. The nurseries are very superficially organized and poorly run, and many teachers have serious qualms about leaving their younger children, particularly babies, in their care. I am altogether in favour of nurseries as a practical solution for working mothers, but I must confess that our experience in the Province with such establishments has not generally been very satisfactory. As far as I am concerned, the entire question ought to be reviewed and re-examined There has been much talk lately of community centres grouping various church, school and leisure activities. I wonder if some means might not be found to incorporate nurseries into these community centres. First of all, you would have a normal environment. For obvious economic reasons, we can no longer afford to pay for the construction of churches, which cost a fortune; sports centres, which are simply white elephants, and special schools are likewise prohibitive. I wonder, in fact, if nurseries might not be set up within schools, side by side with kindergartens, with the three levels of government and the family contributing something towards the operating cost of such establishments since, after all, the working mother has an income, and the nursery allows her greater freedom to pursue an occupation. The state, of course should also contribute....."

With the sole exception of the public school teachers and a handful of union executives, workers generally have never given any thought to the question of providing some form of nursery service for employed mothers. Is the reason for this the fact that women are used to dealing, more or less satisfactorily, with their own problems, that they have acquired the habit of coping, as best they can, by themselves? When workers assert that women do not make their needs known, that they themselves may not know what they need, there is obviously some truth in the charge. On the other hand, unions do have some responsibility for making their members conscious of their own problems as well as for searching for solutions to these problems. As we shall see in the chapter devoted to the participation of women in union activities, workers freely admit that the special problems of feminine employment have not

received much attention. It can also readily be appreciated that married working women are sufficiently worried about the security of their jobs not to wish to draw attention to their specific needs; certainly, the attitudes of their union-brothers hardly encourage them to do so. The very idea of "having one's children looked after by a stranger" shocks and repels a great many workers. It would, no doubt, require a vast amount of education to make them receptive to the idea of professional nursery services, as such.

In the course of our many interviews, not one of the union officials consulted suggested that there existed a need for a committee to be established for the purpose of studying problems relating to the employment of mothers, much less that an experiment might be conducted in collaboration with other groups with reference to nursery services for the children of working mothers. Clearly, the question of nurseries had never come up...Perhaps the problem does not fundamentally concern unions at all. Certainly, nurseries raise an essential question: since the care of workers' children is only indirectly connected with employment, as such, to what extent can trade-unions presume to intervene in matters external to the work situation and concerning the private lives of their members? Is it, in the final analysis, the responsibility of unions to attempt to solve social problems?

For the time being, at any rate, no existing collective labour agreement in the Province of Quebec contains any clause that might lead one to envisage that nurseries will become an issue in negotiations between employers and unions.

RIGHTS OR PRIVILEGES?

Do workers generally feel that female employees claim special privileges? When unions undertake to negotiate specific clauses for the benefit of their female members, do they feel that they are in fact extending preferential treatment to these members or that they are merely defending their proper rights? Whatever the particular issues may be -- whether wage parity or maternity leave -- do the workers at large interpret them as particular privileges for the benefit of female employees? The answers received to question no. 44 of our questionnaire will enlighten us on this point.

TABLE XV

44. - IS THE EMPLOYED MARRIED WOMAN
DEMANDING TOO MANY PRIVILEGES?

<u>1</u>	- yes	13.0%
<u>2</u>	- no	66.1%
<u>3</u>	- undecided	14.2%

Only 34 individuals consulted did not answer.

All in all, workers appear to be in agreement that the demands made by women are just and equitable, and that their claims are not excessive or extravagant.

"I think it is her right to make demands and that, in fact, the married working woman should have started making demands sooner. It is nothing less than shameful for our society that a woman should be obliged to fight for equal rights in the year 1968."

Since women do not make demands,
others must make demands on their behalf:

"Married women do not claim too many privileges because their participation in the activities of their union is a very slight and remote one. Women in employment have a tremendous number of complexes. They wish at all cost to avoid drawing public attention to whatever special problems they may have at work. So far from fighting for their rights, they would rather quit their jobs and go elsewhere to work if they feel they have been unjustly treated and if another opportunity presents itself. I am convinced that there would never be such a thing as a strike in an all-female trade-union over an issue such as maternity leave. For instance, when we wished to make up the text of our maternity leave clause we had to ask the help of our union-sisters; not one of them had any suggestions to make. In order to enable us to negotiate for the inclusion of this clause, we were obliged to have interviews with some of our female members so as to find out what precisely they wanted. In short, they must be protected in spite of themselves. It is all due to a lack of information -- they are just not prepared for the labour market.

Yes, they are claiming
privileges

All things considered, 13% is not a negligible proportion and combined with the 14.2% undecided respondents it shows that more than 25% of those canvassed have reservations concerning the employment of married women.

Is this, we ask, the disgruntled reaction of male workers who feel that their own demands are being thrust into the background by those made on behalf of the female work-force? The following interview may serve to clarify this point.

Among public school teachers:

"There was a great deal of bad feeling in the period of the '60's when the question of adjusting the gaping wage disparities between men and women came up. The male teachers had to accept certain sacrifices in the collective labour agreement that was concluded, and many of them were under the impression that they had been deprived of something. Their feeling was as follows: the School Commission has a certain fixed allotment of funds it can pay. If you establish wage parity between the sexes, all it will mean is that a certain proportion of the available funds will be used to bring up women's wages. And so it went. When a woman pays \$75. union membership dues, she has the full right to get as much as her union-brother. Don't forget that in a plenary meeting of the rank-and-file, you might get as many as 4,000 female teachers out of a total of 6,000. Clearly, they are in a powerful position. In our teachers' unions, the women command the majority of votes."

Typically feminine requests:

A union official whom we interviewed enumerated for us certain requests made by female workers to employers -- requests which it would never occur to a male worker to make. It may be pointed out that the privileges mentioned in the following statement were requested by telephone operators and telephone company employees across the Province of Quebec.

"Yes, the women do ask for special privileges. Take, for example, the question of night transportation. Women who work evenings and nights don't like having to walk home unattended at a late hour. Women will also be more finicky when it comes to such questions as the colour of

the walls in the office and the general atmosphere in the place where they work. In fact, in collective labour agreements involving principally female employees there are clauses relating to this sort of thing. Women will attach great importance to considerations such as having comfortable chairs to sit in. You will never find similar clauses in labour contracts for men, whereas they are almost invariably part of the conditions stipulated in women's work agreements. In industries where the work is done almost exclusively by a female work force concessions of this type are easily obtained from the employers."

A warning

A white-collar union official interviewed in the course of our investigation thought it worthwhile to sound a note of warning concerning special requests made by the female labour force. There is a danger, he warned, that employers may find some of the demands made by their female employees difficult or onerous to meet. Similar fears were voiced by other union officials as well, who agreed that excessive or extravagant requests made by women may tend to encourage employers to hire men in their place.

"One of my worst fears is that once wage parity has been achieved, employers will practise discrimination against women in hiring. Thus, each time that a woman asks for maternity leave, they tell us: 'Listen, if you keep on asking for things like that, we will hire only men.' The question is, what long-range effect is this going to have on the employment of women? Above all, in view of their lack of sustained motivation ... The turnover of female staff in the 19 to 20 year age range is simply fantastic. It may go as high as 60%. Employers who want, above all, stable employees will, if the trend continues, prefer to hire men rather than women."

STATE INTERVENTION

Women's rights ought to be protected by law, guaranteed by legislative enactment. This, in essence, is the point of view expressed by unionized workers when questioned with regard to wage parity, maternity leave, night work, and so forth. According to them, once the principle has received official recognition, there would be no more question of special privilege or of preferential treatment but, simply, of legal right. As things are, however, organized labour must fight for the recognition of basic principles of women's employment.

"The problem in a nutshell consists in knowing under what conditions the employer will accede to our demands for certain clauses, such as those permitting women to take time off from work in the event that one of their children is ill, and such like. There is always the possibility that the employer will make us pay dearly for the concession he makes. You know, one always pays the price for a new right gained in a collective labour agreement. A great deal of the work should really be done by the government; this would not exclude taking advantage of collective bargaining to improve the legislation. The law never goes beyond guaranteeing the absolute minimum, and sometimes it is completely ineffectual and irrelevant in what it guarantees. On the other hand, if a principle receives legal approval, it becomes immediately much easier to negotiate for new concessions deriving from it."

NEITHER RIGHT NOR PRIVILEGE

Ultimately, it is in terms neither of rights nor of privileges that the problem of feminine employment must be viewed. To approach it from this point of view is only to perpetuate the prejudices and suspicions with which working women are greeted by the labour market and by employers alike, and to postpone indefinitely their final integration into the working environment. Let us, in this connection, quote at length the testimony of a career union official, if for no other reason than that it compels us to see the situation of the female labour force in our society in a new light.

"If society needs the work of women, and indications are that it does, I believe that we ought to do everything to facilitate their employment. I am not raising the issue of whether women have a right to work; I am merely considering social needs. Society is dependent upon the productivity of its female members. Hence it follows that it must create satisfactory conditions for the employment of women. Just as it must ensure sanitary working conditions and safety precautions for men, by the same token, if there is a need for feminine labour, it must be so organized as to allow women to fulfil their family and biological responsibilities. Now if, on the other hand, society does not really need feminine labour, that is, if it has simply a certain quantity of work to be done by anyone capable of doing it, then I believe that society has no obligation to create any particularly favourable working conditions for women. Without there being an absolute need for feminine labour, in other words,

there can be no justification for special concessions being made to women. In such a case women should have no rights or privileges over and above those enjoyed by men. If at a given time in her life a woman should wish to have children, this being the case, she ought to take the consequences of her decision. Motherhood is a social function which should be remunerated by the state."

WOMEN ARE NOT ASKING FOR TOO MANY PRIVILEGES

The problems incidental to feminine employment create a degree of uneasiness among unionized workers. They are aware that certain reforms are imperative, that certain steps should be taken to improve the working conditions of women and to make the exercise of their roles as mothers easier. It is in the practical working out of solutions that complications arise. Organized labour is not quite convinced that it is the responsibility of the unions to agitate for and to secure these reforms; indeed, there is a feeling that the labour movement has received this responsibility, as it were, by default, that is, by reason of there being no other agency or institution to assume it. This may, in part, serve to explain the ambiguity of the attitudes taken to feminine work by male workers: "the women are not asking for too many privileges...but...on the other hand they somehow force us to bargain for clauses which have no significance or value for the mass of the workers." The roots of this ambiguity strike deep into the very bases of our society. Can we maintain that our society has a clear conception of the place of feminine labour and of the role of women in the light of the objectives it pursues?

ABSENTEEISM

Before concluding the present chapter concerning married women in remunerative employment some mention must be made of the problem of absenteeism. Even though none of the questions included in our questionnaire dealt directly with this point, it came up repeatedly in the course of our interviews with union officials. According to them, employers often complain of excessive absenteeism among their female employees, both married and single.

In the electrical industry

"There is more absenteeism among women than among men. Married women occasionally stay away from work for family reasons whereas single girls, with the salaries that they

make, may stay away for amusement, to go out or to take little trips. There are also more delicate and intimate reasons -- menstruation, for example -- which account for a high proportion of absences among female employees."

In the civil service

"Absenteeism is more frequent among white-collar workers than among manual labourers. Perhaps the reason for this is that the sick leave systems in effect in offices are more permissive. The women stay away from work for all sorts of reasons. Obviously, some of the absences are caused by periodic discomfort. A rather odd thing, at least in the district of Chambly, is that the excuse one hears fairly often is having had a miscarriage -- whether it is true, or not, I have no idea, but it has become a pretty standard excuse. I would say that, on the whole, the rate of absenteeism is higher in the case of young women, say between the ages of 19 and 30 years, than in the case of the older ones."

In an industrial manufacturing plant in the area of Sherbrooke

"If one can place any reliance on figures provided us by employers, there is a great deal of absenteeism, particularly at certain special times of the year. To some extent, one can anticipate this. Absences become more frequent around spring house-cleaning time, school vacation time in the summer, and again fall house-cleaning. The women find plenty of excuses for not coming to work: with one, it may be sickness; with another, it may simply be the need of a rest. If anything, health insurance has tended to increase absenteeism among employees, since it gives them a certain income even when they are not working."

EXPLANATIONS FOR THE HIGH RATE OF FEMININE ABSENTEEISM

Assuming that the frequency of absences is higher among female than it is among male employees, what explanations can we offer for this phenomenon? We are not, for the moment, challenging the accuracy of the statistics furnished us by employers, even though much could be said on that subject. (It may be remarked here that workers questioned in this connection provided answers very similar to those received from employers. When unionized workers are asked to account for the high rate of female absenteeism, both justified and unjustified, all give much the same explanation: the female worker is less highly

motivated, not being the first and sole provider of a family. By way of evidence, they cite the example of young girls responsible for supporting their families and of women in similar situations, pointing to their infrequent absence from work. In fact, these female 'providers' have a considerably lower rate of absenteeism than the men.) We have selected from among our various interviews one statement by a unionist in an employment sector making much use of female personnel.

In the telephone industry:

"The women have a higher rate of absenteeism than the men in our business. I think that the reason for this is principally that the women are not called upon to support families, as the men are. In many of the cases, the women take jobs to make some additional income for their families. Their salaries go into the purchase of things not considered essential. When a woman is the sole supporter of a family, she does not have nearly as many absences -- certainly not more than a man. I feel that there is no distinction to be made in this respect between the single girls and the married women -- the difference, rather, is between those women who depend on their salaries for their livelihood, and those who do not. You get single and married women in both categories -- it often happens, for example, that a girl must work to help support her family or to support herself. I would say that with widows, divorcees and separated women much the same situation obtains. They are far less likely to take time off from work. But when you are dealing with women who have less need of earning money, you will find a higher percentage that care much less whether they come to work or not."

THE CONSEQUENCES OF ABSENTEEISM

A) INCREASE IN HEALTH INSURANCE PREMIUMS

The high rate of feminine absenteeism from work causes considerable disenchantment with working women, even among those generally favourable to their employment. Among other consequences, absenteeism brings about a rise in the cost of group health insurance.

In an industrial manufacturing firm:

"In a plant employing about equal numbers of men and women, health insurance premiums may be as high as \$2 or \$3 per month. Most of the time, these exorbitant rates are due

to the high frequency of absences, absences more or less justified by notes from physicians."

B) EMPLOYERS HAVE A READY COME-BACK IN NEGOTIATIONS

According to our informants, many employers will, as a matter of practice, resort to the argument of female absenteeism at each labour negotiation session. The argument serves them as a convenient weapon to fight demands for specific clauses or measures benefiting working women. An unstable and unreliable work force, and one which contributes to the high costs of production by requiring that provision be made for replacements, has no right to expect favourable, let alone preferential, treatment, etc... Such is the sort of argument union negotiators find thrown in their teeth by employers, much to the frustration of their efforts at improving the lot of the working woman. Many statements gathered in the course of our investigation corroborate the prevalence of this argument in labour negotiations; the following are merely a sample.

In the telephone industry

"Whenever we try to improve the social condition of the married or single working woman, the companies tell us that they are willing to go up to a certain point, but that it is impossible to run a business or industry by handing out holidays left and right. They must be able to trust their staff. And so it becomes practically impossible to negotiate labour contracts which would permit, let us say, the absence of a working woman in the event of her child being sick, etc."

In the hospital services sector

"The main problem that the union faces with regard to its female membership is the question of absenteeism for reasons of ill-health. The employer is not always willing to accept the explanation, and often suspects that the absentee is simply availing herself of the sick leave permitted her under the labour agreement to do other things, such as go on shopping expeditions, go for walks, etc. This, I would say, is the most frequent problem facing us with our female membership."

A union organizer:

"I have been involved in negotiations all through the province and in virtually every region this is the thing that employers comment on. When, for example, we ask for maternity leave or bring up the question of promotions --

when, in other words, we suggest that women should be given equal treatment with the men in so far as promotions are concerned -- employers invariably throw in our faces the high rate of female absenteeism. At the same time, the older women get the less they stay away from work. The married women, particularly those more advanced in age, are considerably stabler than the single girls."

Let us admit for the sake of argument that figures do not lie and that, in this particular case, the majority opinion of employers is justified. Yet we feel compelled to ask ourselves to what extent absenteeism is not merely a convenient excuse for employers to use for the purpose of keeping women in subordinate positions and of confining them to the less remunerative jobs. Very little work has been done in the Province of Quebec to study the underlying causes of feminine absenteeism, whereas a great deal of statistical evidence is available proving the prevalence of this condition, and this evidence is often used as an unanswerable argument against the advancement of women. Work done outside the Province of Quebec has conclusively demonstrated that the frequency of absences is inversely proportional to the level of the employee's qualifications. Furthermore, it is clear that the more interest women can take in their work, the more deeply involved they get in it, the less likely they will be to make unjustified use of their sick leave privileges. Teachers in the public school system are a case in point.

An experiment reported to us by a career union official demonstrates that, if absenteeism is a sickness, it is at any rate curable. Various solutions to the problem may be envisaged. The employer who seeks to reduce absenteeism by imposing sanctions or penalties of one kind or another on the offender is surely not acting wisely. That is, unless absenteeism is merely a convenient excuse brandished about by employers in an attempt to keep the working woman in her present unfavourable position.

In the tobacco manufacturing industry

"I could go as far as to say that absenteeism is a problem in certain work environments only because the employers wish to make it one. When, for example, we managed to obtain a shorter work week in our line of employment, we suggested that the reduction of working hours be applied to the last day of the week. In other words, we suggested that the $36\frac{1}{2}$ hour week be divided into 4 days of $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours each and one day of $6\frac{1}{2}$ hours,

so as to permit the women to get away a little earlier Fridays to do their house chores or their errands. The companies that accepted this proposal were the gainers by the arrangement because absences, instead of increasing, actually diminished in number. But the other companies still want to have nothing to do with this formula. They say that employees will tend to stay away from work on the shorter days because they would stand to lose less if they did. Actually those companies have more absenteeism. In Quebec City negotiations were more protracted on this account, the companies insisting on having five days of equal length. I think that, if anything, these firms will experience more absenteeism than ever, because the workers resent their unwillingness to cooperate. Absenteeism is a problem that has been rectified in certain places. If it is not corrected elsewhere, the reason may well be lack of good will on the employer's part."

CHAPTER 3

WOMEN AND TRADE-UNIONISM

PARTICIPATION BY WOMEN IN UNION ACTIVITIES

It is natural that women should find allies among the men workers, whose demands for justice and dignity are the same as their own. The trade-union movement, by its very nature, should provide the opportunity for them to achieve these goals.

As we saw in the earlier chapters, individual union members have a different concept of what is men's work and what is women's work. Collectively, as members of a union, they are led to advocate measures tending to upgrade the professional status of working women in such matters as narrowing pay differentials based on sex, seeing that benefits already won such as seniority, protection for pregnant women, etc., are enforced. Although many of these demands have not yet been met to the satisfaction of the unions, nevertheless they have been placed before employers and a society that usually resist such demands.

However, a number of the respondents to this survey also referred to the lack of interest and the lack of militancy among working women, who are too often ignorant or unconcerned about their rights. The list of grievances is long enough (it is not our job here to justify them) to convey the impression of men union members that the gains made on behalf of women constitute as it were gifts generously offered to them.

Do these remarks and opinions apply in the same way to women who, like themselves, are engaged in trade-union activities? But are they, after all, so engaged? What is the extent of their participation, in the opinion of male union members? Their answers are given in the table which follows.

At this point, some figures on the number of women in union ranks are in order. According to the 1965 statistics there were 90,635 women union members in Quebec. This is 20.3 per cent of the union membership in the province.^{1/}

^{1/}
Cf. Appendix: Union Membership.

TABLE XVI

46. ARE WOMEN UNION MEMBERS ACTIVE MILITANTS?

1. yes	34.0%
2. no	24.9%
3. not very active	30.7%

One striking fact emerges from the above table, which is indicated in the same proportions in question 45 (see questionnaire in appendix). Half the respondents are not prepared to say that women take an active part in the labour movement and maintain that they take less interest than men in union affairs. This was also the general opinion registered in the taped interviews.

"I regret to say that the female union member on the whole is a person who pays her dues but is not deeply involved in the life of the union."

"They do not have a personal interest (in the union). They are not interested, because of their matrimonial or other activities. Their free time is used for something else and not for engaging in union activities."

"They take little part in their union, even when they are in the majority. They do not look after their own affairs but leave it up to the union's business agents."

The reasons:

"Most of the time, a woman does not go to work for life; she does not think of making a career in the factory. She does not feel the need to unite with her fellow-workers--men and women--in demanding better working conditions, pay and fringe benefits. Most of the time she says to herself: 'I am going to work for a couple of years.' Usually it is for a specific purpose such as buying a house, a car or some other thing she may want."

In short, we find the same explanations here as those mentioned throughout this survey. A woman is working for a time; she has too many obligations outside her job; she doubles as

a housewife; she prefers to work under men supervisors, and so forth.

However, we did note some further comments which may give us a broader understanding of union members' behaviour.

Lack of Union Education

"There is no union education. In school, the trade-union movement is portrayed as a machine for holding strikes. This is particularly true of girls' schools. As a result, women workers are prejudiced against unions when they enter the labour market. The same is true of the boys. Make a tour of the universities and the School of Higher Commercial Studies and you will find the same thing. The labour congresses are doing their best to promote union education, but here again it is always the same people who attend the courses. Besides, they should overhaul their methods. The unions must get rid of their old constitutions and must make a fresh start by enacting new statutes and by-laws..."

One union leader specified that in the banking and clerical occupations in particular there is no union tradition. These sectors have only recently been organized. Hence the difficulty in getting the women to participate.

Speaking of union education, one leader pointed out that "the women's organizations, in particular the Fédération des Femmes du Québec, should concern themselves with on-the-job training of women, union education, and what they should do in a union so that they will not feel only 'like guests in the union'."

Are There Exceptions to the Rule?

There are however some women who are active militants in the labour movement, a fact attested by 34 per cent of the respondents. To be sure, unions with large numbers of women members should normally have a proportionate share of true militants among the women. However, it seems that some sectors have more than others. Among hospital workers, great progress is being made by women unionists.

"If you look through our minutes you will discover that the number of women who have taken part in our discussions is impressive. We are perhaps one of the CNTU affiliates with the most women actively participating both

as militants and in our technical services."

It is probably in the teaching profession that the largest number of dedicated women union workers are found at present.

"I can tell you that we have in our ranks a union elite whose militancy is very strong and very advanced. You would be amazed to see the militancy of some of the women leaders of the Alliance, in our committees, in our seminars and our organizations. Militancy is so strong in some women that it may lead them to extend their activities to other areas than unionism. We did not have this five years ago--women whose main purpose in life goes far beyond gaining union demands. They start from basic principles and call into question the political, economic, social and cultural structures, and even the educational system. They want to work for the reform of society."

The two sectors we have just mentioned have been particularly active in recent years. The unions have fought hard to achieve a reduction in wage disparities, improvement in working conditions, and so forth. As women form a majority of the membership, they have had to become deeply involved in the action, particularly during the strikes which have taken place in those sectors. This does not mean of course that they are all prepared to accept positions of responsibility.

"When a woman is convinced, she gives herself heart and soul to the cause"

This statement by a union leader reflects the thinking of his colleagues concerning women militants in unions, because although they are not easy to enlist, once they accept, they do not flinch.

"Once they have decided to take the plunge, after due consideration, they seldom go back on their word. You often find men who will say O.K. to everything you say. They tell you they are prepared to back you up to the limit, and so on. But often, after a time, they change their minds. A woman on the other hand, once she has made up her mind, will persevere."

Very often, it is during a strike that women militants discover the place there is for them in the union movement. The strike then acts as a sort of catalyst. Moreover, it is

during strikes that men and women stand shoulder to shoulder, without rivalry, to defend their common interests.

Behaviour of women union members
during a strike

"Women are reluctant to assume the responsibility of being president or vice-president, but when there is a strike they can be just as militant as men. Sometimes they are even more militant than the male officers. In one strike in which women formed the majority, five or six of the women became actively interested and turned out to be the most revolutionary ones in the group."

A strike organizer said:

"They are definitely very convinced militants, for several reasons. The main reason is that women are extremely clear-headed when they take a strike vote, and when they are on strike they remain cool and calculating. I find them extremely intelligent in that they have no use for violence. But it does mean something to them to walk off the job to win recognition of the principle of equal pay for equal work. Take the women whom I remember in the Penmans strike for example, where I had 700-odd women out on strike and 200-odd men. I can say without exaggeration that the women were really the shock-troops in that strike. I am also thinking of the strike at Dupuis Frères, in which the morale of the women was outstanding. These women certainly did not know the first thing about trade-unionism, yet they did picketing and other chores that few men did willingly. I thought they were terrific, especially as in this strike everything took place right out on St. Catherine Street in the gaze of the public in a big city like Montreal. They conducted themselves like great little women."

How do male union members react to
this ultra-militant and dynamic
attitude of the women strikers?

"In the first place, this can be embarrassing to the men, at least to those who do not have the courage of the convictions they express so regularly. In the end, the fellows get used to it. They feel that it is an advantage in a strike to have women who take trade-unionism

to heart and show the men that when you strike you have to use your brains and not only your feet and fists. It takes brains to carry out a strike. Every time I have had to lead a strike in which there are both men and women taking part, I have realized that there was no jealousy. There was mostly amazement on the part of the men. The women bring a sense of order to everything--to the meetings and the picket lines--and the men have extraordinary respect for their women co-workers."

To sum up, when the male union members say that the women are not very active union workers they are referring to the attitude of the women in union meetings, where they have very little to say. The explanation should perhaps be sought in the negative attitude of the men. As some union leaders pointed out,

"When they speak, the men don't listen; they say in advance that it is not important."

EXECUTIVE POSITIONS IN UNIONS

WOMEN IN POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY IN THE UNIONS

TABLE XVII

47. HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THE SMALL PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN IN POSITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY IN THE UNIONS?

1. - lack of interest	29.4%
2. - lack of information	33.1%
3. - difficulty in working with men	12.8%
4. - obstruction by men	12.8%

It is interesting to compare the answers to question 47 with the answers to question 23 concerning positions of leadership. Whereas 9.5 per cent of the respondents think that women do not attain positions of leadership "because of lack of interest", in the case of union responsibilities, 29.4 per cent give this as one of the main explanations. Whereas

33.1 per cent indicate "lack of information" as a major reason for the position of women in the unions, 22 per cent give lack of qualifications as a reason in question 23. Judging by the answers to the questionnaire, it does not seem easy for men and women to work together. Some 12.8 per cent blame the men for the difficulties and 12.8 per cent blame the women. Let us see the reactions of those who were interviewed.

Women refuse the positions; they
prefer to have men leaders

"No, because in the short industry for example, in a small shop, you have three or four men. The remaining forty or fifty workers are women. There are one or two tailors, a shipper, and that's about all the men there are. If there is a man, the women will always try to elect him president. You have to fight with them and tell them that some of these men are nitwits and numbskulls who should never be nominated for that position. You have to play politics and say to them, 'Listen, there are fifty of you women and two men. Surely there is one woman in this bunch who is intelligent enough...' But they say that if there is a man they feel obliged to give the office to him. That is just lack of education. They don't have confidence in themselves, but once they have decided to give it a try, then that's that. There is no more trouble."

Lack of Interest

"There are fewer women than there should be, although I think that this tendency is diminishing. Why is this? They have been in the habit of leaving it to the men to deal with those problems. I do not think the women have really tried to get those positions, because if they had wanted to, with all the qualifications they have, they could have put some of the present union leaders who are men in their place. Women can learn just as well as men can. No one becomes active in union work without studying and continuing to study. Perhaps it is true that the women are not so well prepared as the men, but with their qualities, if they really wanted to be active in union affairs they could do so."

Mistaken Impression

"Women think that it is a hard job requiring burly men with powerful voices to impress the employer."

They are better defended by men

"Several unions have women officers, especially those with a predominantly female membership. In textile unions such as the one at Permians, lots of women hold offices such as shop steward, union officer, secretary and treasurer. But in plants where there are more men than women, the women at present have totally abdicated their responsibilities. You may find one or two women, but most of the time it is just a matter of sentiment. Women always feel they are better defended by men. It is a matter of education, but there is also the fact that the married woman who sometimes does not want to work all her life is "in transit" in industry. At this time she has her responsibilities and is satisfied to let others act for her. She agrees to whatever is done, whether it is good or bad."

Lack of Qualifications

"There has been considerable progress. I remember formal boycotts by men, and at that time I don't think it was only a matter of sex. People do not allow themselves to be bossed by someone who wants to run everything. A woman has to command respect in her job or in her union. She must have a very unusual character. She has to be twice as strong as the men around her to be accepted in a union or on the job. There are some women who have much more ability than some men, but they will never command attention because of their personality."

"It is very rare for a woman to be taken seriously at a big union meeting. Perhaps the women do not come as well prepared to the meetings. It is men who make the speeches in large congresses like those of the CLC or the CNTU. They do some preparation for the convention but it is true that they have previous preparation as well. They have played an active part in their union, something which the women perhaps have not done."

Prejudices

It is all very well to assert that women trade-unionists do not have positions of responsibility in the union because they are not qualified. But if by any chance they do have the qualifications, their fellow members refuse to recognize the fact. How could a woman understand and intelligently explain a point of law? This is how age-old prejudices concerning the intellectual capacities of women are expressed. Besides, isn't organization a prerogative of men in our society? Why should it be otherwise in the trade-union movement?

"The most important thing, to my mind, is organization. You can easily organize a group of women workers with men as organizers, but you will never organize a group of men with women as organizers. If you have women union workers, you can not send them to do organization work among men. They would not be taken seriously.

It is harder for men to take orders or to have labour legislation explained to them by a woman. This is very hard for them to accept. Note that we do have women who do union work, and most of them are doing a fine job. They are very capable and most of them will study and keep in the forefront of progress. But when there is an organization campaign, it is hard for a group of men to have a point of law explained to them by a woman or to be convinced by a woman of the merits of joining a union. Women on the other hand readily agree to be organized by men, once you start the ball rolling. Quite often, at the beginning of an organization campaign, it is very difficult for us to get into the homes or get the women out to the first meetings. It takes women to do this. When they talk among themselves they will say, 'There is a meeting tonight; we should go'."

They lose their femininity

"Unfortunately, the ones I have known were not at all feminine. They became president of their union by elbowing everyone aside, by asserting themselves, by acting like men when conducting annual meetings or doing other union work. I have never known any woman who agreed to serve as president of a union who has retained her femininity. Their manner of expressing themselves for example was somehow mannish, and one would think that they had assumed this manner merely

to command attention. I have not known any women who remained womanly in the true sense of the word after becoming presidents of their unions."

"Yes, and besides, men don't like to be bossed by a woman, and any woman who has to boss a group of men will be called a tomboy. These are problems of mental habits and mental habits take generations to change."

There! The cat is out of the bag. There is a place for women in trade unions as long as they are dependent, as long as they are "creatures to be protected and defended in spite of themselves". If they meddle and try to lead or control the union they had better be clad in armour because they make ideal targets.

"Here we have C.D., who was president of the predominantly male union. She has very sound judgment and we kid her, saying that she would make a good man..."

"If a woman holding a position in the union makes a mistake, she is not forgiven. A woman has to be perfect to run a union which also has men as members."

The married woman's dual role bars her from positions of responsibility

While admitting that some female union activists are perfectly fit to hold office in unions, a number of the male unionists who were questioned indicated that family obligations were the main obstacle.

"Here is another point I should like to emphasize: a married woman has too much to do at home and is not physically able to do the work she has to do at the plant."

Women in executive positions in unions

All that has been said about women holding executive positions in unions might indicate that there are no women holding top-level positions in the unions or that they make up for it in the unit. Perhaps they do not play a part that is proportionate to their numbers, but they do play a part.

At the local level, mainly in industries that employ mostly female labour, women hold positions in their union executive or serve as departmental representatives to the general meeting.

Regarding the situation at the top echelons of the organization we quote from a report of the CNTU to the Industrial Relations Conference at Laval University in 1967.

"Among the 60 presidents, secretaries and treasurers of the central Councils there are only 8 women. Among the 30 presidents, secretaries and treasurers of the federations and sections, only 2 are women. Out of almost 200 business agents, only 5 are women. Two of these are at the Confederation level and 3 are in the same federation.

The federation with the most women officers is the federation of hospital workers, in which 3 out of 10 officers on the executive and 48 out of 183 delegates to the federal Board are women."

The same can be said for our
political institutions

"In the labour movement, there are more women holding positions of responsibility than in society as a whole. Relatively speaking, there are more women who are presidents of their union or who hold important positions in their union. For example, there are proportionately more women in positions of union responsibility than in our parliaments or our municipal councils."

INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN THE UNION RANKS

FORM OF WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN UNIONISM

TABLE XVIII

48. ARE YOU IN FAVOUR OF

1. complete integration of women in the union ranks	52.3%
2. a women's trade-union movement	6.2%
3. women's committees within unions	28.0%

No reply: 13.4%

The majority of male union members said they favoured integration of women in the labour movement. This point of view was confirmed by all those who were interviewed. A labour movement divided along sex lines would lead to scattering of forces and hence to weakening of the pressure group.

"I would say rather that it should be a complete integration, because if we had a separate women's committee in a particular shop, I don't see how they could get together at the top. It would make union work more difficult for both groups."

"Personally, I am against unionism divided along lines of sex. I do not think any distinction should be made between men and women union members. They are union members, period. They all support the union's demands and are seeking ways and means of attaining their objective."

"I think women should be an integral part of all aspects of union life. If you separate them, it won't work; I'm convinced of that. It has been tried. I don't know what will happen in ten years, but for the time being, I am convinced that the best thing to do is to integrate them. But the men will have to make an effort to win their support, because they will not come by themselves. Quite often we go looking for members and we make the effort to attract the women. We have to, because 75 per cent of our employees are women. Put it this way: it is not just because we want some women members, it is a matter of necessity. We have to do it, and once they have become members, there is no more problem. They are just as good as men."

"I would favour integration of women in the union. Normally, all our members are full-fledged members, but women have a big battle to fight, because they are not always accepted by the men. Some women will argue very logically, and others try to act according to their feelings. But sentiment does not always go down well with the men. If we set out one day to integrate the women fully, we will still have our work cut out."

"So I rule out the formation of women's committees designed to give them a union life of their own. As I see it, when they belong to the union they must go the whole hog; they must take part in its activities and stop having complexes."

In some unions it is an understood thing that one of the vice-president positions is reserved for a woman. This custom is not supported by all male unionists.

"I am against vice-presidencies for women. I am against women's committees, which are committees for working off frustrations or letting off steam. In my opinion, those things only accentuate discrimination. I consider that a woman may very well be general president of the Confederation of National Trade Unions or prime minister of Canada, but I do not agree to any position of woman vice-president."

Women's Committees

Although there is unanimity among the male union members and officers interviewed on the question of complete integration of women in the unions, some of them mentioned the possible usefulness of special activities for women.

"I am strongly in favour of complete integration as far as the union is concerned. I think we should also encourage women to have special activities that are likely to be of interest to a large number of them. But I am opposed to separate union information committees. Men need discussion and information just as much as women do. If they are poorly informed it is because we are not doing our job as we should. We would not do any better with committees."

"We have women's committees in the electrical unions. At the international and national levels special conferences are held for women only, at which only problems of interest to women are discussed."

"I have an instinctive distrust of all these ghettos, whether they be ghettos of women, of negroes, of immigrants or of young people. There are some people who criticize the unions for not having youth sections. It is my feeling that when someone enters the labour market he assumes a labour status. Moreover, he loses his status as a young person, because youth is not a matter of biological age.

There is also less talk of women's sections in the labour movement than in the political parties. The unions cannot afford to have sections of any kind. Unionism is based on the solidarity of all workers within a work situation or within a particular trade or occupation. When you call a strike, it is not a strike of the male workers, the female workers or the young workers. When you go on strike it is a strike of all the workers concerned. You cannot group the workers by language, religion, political persuasion, age, race, sex and so on. It isn't possible."

UNION EXPERIENCE

It was not the intention of this study to measure the exact influence of unionism on the attitude of the workers to women's employment. Other methods of approach and evaluation would have been necessary. However, it seemed important to us to know whether the union members attributed their way of thinking to their union experience. In other words, are union members aware that belonging to the labour movement may have changed their opinions on the question we are concerned with.

TABLE XIX

49. BEFORE YOU JOINED THE UNION MOVEMENT
WOULD YOU HAVE ANSWERED THIS
QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE SAME WAY?

1. yes	55.1%
2. No	37.2%

This table shows that slightly over one-third of the respondents recognize the influence which unionism may have had on the development of their thinking about paid employment for women. In the cross-checking question (see Appendix, question 50) the percentage is roughly the same. To the question "Has your union experience changed your opinions on women's employment outside the home?", 31.9 per cent replied in the affirmative.

On the other hand, 55.1 per cent of the respondents do not admit that unionism has changed their thinking. Should we conclude from this that unionism has not been a factor in the development of half its members? We think this would be a slightly hasty judgment, because there are so many different ways of explaining and interpreting these replies.

In compiling the results of this survey, we found that the respondents tend to make a distinction between their own opinions and those of other men in general, attributing prevailing ideas, commonplaces and conventional ways of reacting to others. On the other hand, it is quite evident that men do not like to give credit to others for their ideas. Another explanation is the nature of our sample, since many of the respondents are engaged in types of work where female labour is rare, such as the metal industries. These workers

certainly have fewer opportunities to discuss problems of women in industry and to take a stand on certain controversial issues. Moreover, the male unionists may be subject to combined influences related to the presence of women in the labour market and not only to the influence of the union. Finally, a number of them, as we shall see in the next chapter, criticize the unions for not having concerned themselves sufficiently with the lot of women workers. These are some possible interpretations of the 55.1 per cent, although we do not deny that in a number of cases the influence of unionism is nil.

In the interviews, on the other hand, the percentages are reversed. More than half of the union officers assert that unionism has transformed their thinking about women's employment. The training of the militants is certainly more noticeable in the officers, because they are in more direct contact with the thinking of their central bodies and are called upon to express their views and take positions in general meetings, conferences, etc., on policy matters, with a view to the general interests of the workers.

Fourteen years of unionism

"I think so. When I was an ordinary worker, I would not say that the presence of women annoyed me. I would say, rather, that I did not care one way or the other. But my participation in the labour movement taught me that they had a place in the world of labour like any other worker and that at the same time they had contracted many of the rights and obligations that go with the status of a wage-earner."

Ten years of union experience

"Absolutely, yes. I did not have the same ideas about women before I became involved in union activity. I had always thought that women were made just to be mothers and to please men. I see now that their responsibilities are much greater, that they have other things to do besides having children and making their husbands happy. There are certain responsibilities in this world and in our society that should be assumed by women."

Four years of union experience

"I had the same opinions and now I am much more convinced of them than I was before."

Eleven years of union experience

"Unquestionably, yes. A few years ago, I was not in favour of women working at all. I felt that they were taking work away from the men, who were the family breadwinners. I felt that women were not very responsible and should be regarded as ornaments. This was perhaps due to the way I was brought up. I have had to revise all my thinking on this question. Today I see things in a different light. When I saw women come to complain because they were being badly treated by the employer, I said to myself: 'The union must protect these women'..."

Harsh judgment of male
union members

"To answer yes to this question means that I think union men have a more highly developed social conscience. But unfortunately this is not true on the whole. We would like to believe that men union members have social values, that they are willing to take a greater interest in social problems. But it is not true. Even among the most militant unionists we find out-and-out selfishness."

We had thought that the number of years of union experience might be an important variable, but it is nothing of the kind. According to the cross-checks made in Question 49, this detail has no bearing on the attitude of union members. There is however a close correlation between the position a man holds in the union and the development that can knowingly be attributed to unionism. In fact, it is the responsibilities, plus the number of years of service, responsibilities taken during negotiations or a strike, that create and stimulate awareness of the problems facing women workers.

TRADE UNIONISM AND WORKING WOMEN

The respondents to this questionnaire are all union men. Their participation in union activity varies greatly, since 38.3% have less than 5 years' experience, 26.7% have from 5 to 10 years, and 30.2% have been in the union movement for more than 10 years. We therefore have a slightly higher percentage of new union workers than of old union stalwarts. However, it can be said that the majority have been indoctrinated with the ideology of the movement for at least 5 years, a period which coincides with the sharp rise in the number of working women. Do these workers feel that sufficient attention has been given within the labour movement to the professional status of women? Their answers are given in the following table:

TABLE XX

51. DO YOU THINK THAT THE LABOUR MOVEMENT
HAS CONCERNED ITSELF SUFFICIENTLY WITH
THE FUTURE OF WORKING WOMEN?

1. yes	29.0%
2. no	46.7%
3. undecided	16.3%

8% did not answer

A higher percentage -- 46.7% vs 29.0% -- replied in the negative, which would seem to indicate an awareness on the part of the union members in the sample of the unions' task and of the important part they have to play in improving the status of working women. These figures are borne out by the opinions of the union officers consulted.

"Definitely not. I think the labour movement has neglected this aspect, that we have not concerned ourselves with it as we should. Even our own union,^{1/} which is perhaps slightly more advanced than some, has certainly not done enough. We should concentrate our efforts on making it easier for women

^{1/}

The tobacco industry

to find openings in the labour market."

"There is perhaps some concern shown by the unions, but I would say it is only a beginning. There is nothing systematic about it, because although we have figures showing the expansion of the female labour force, I think we are still a long way from giving serious thought to the problem. The idea may strike a few individuals but not the movement as such."

"Not particularly. It would be lying to say that we have done something. No concerted action has been taken to ensure the development of women in the factory or in the union. The whole problem is with the male union members; it is not just the fault of the women who do not react. There are some who object in principle, to women working. They do not realize that this is something that will continue to increase. As a result, they are not motivated to work for the advancement of women in industry."

"We must of course improve our contracts by winning certain benefits that would make it easier for married women to remain in industry. As I think that the working married woman is here to stay, we will have to revise our agreements. A start has been made on maternity provisions. There was one clause that was really barbarous, but there are other things. In Europe, for example, certain provisions are made for married women in the textile and clothing industries which could be adopted here."

Even though the recorded comments of the respondents are borne out by statistics and although half of the voices express the opinion that the union movement has not gone overboard to concern itself with the working woman, it should be emphasized, as one union business agent noted, that the struggles waged by the unions for recognition of the workers' rights and improvement of their working conditions have benefited the women just as much as the men, although the action was not taken specifically on their behalf.

"We have succeeded in obtaining shorter working hours, improving conditions and reducing child labour. A few years ago, girls who started work at 14 or 15 years of age in laundries or manufacturing plants were ruined physically at the age of 25. I think the unions, by correcting many of these problems, have enhanced the value of women's work also by obtaining better pay, holidays and fringe benefits. What has been done for the

men has automatically improved women's working conditions."

How can we explain the fact that 46.7% of the male union members who answered this questionnaire consider that the union movement has not concerned itself sufficiently with the future of working women, when we have heard throughout this study some evidence proving on the contrary that much has been done for working women? Suffice to recall some of the facts brought to our attention, some of the gains won most of the time through hard fighting, in sectors such as teaching, to abolish salary scales which discriminate on the basis of sex; in the civil service and the hospital occupations to raise wages and improve working conditions; in industry for the establishment of standards for job classification, measures for the protection of pregnant women, and so forth. In the opinion of the respondents, recognition of women workers' rights has been granted sometimes in spite of the apathy and indifference of the women concerning their own situation, without any demands being made directly by the workers concerned. This reaction of the male union members, which is contradictory in appearance, is probably the most significant and revealing indication of a new awareness of the phenomenon of women in industry.

Under the pressure of events, particularly the rapid upsurge in the numbers of women in the Quebec labour force and the unionization of further sectors largely composed of women, the thinking of the male union members is forced to evolve. It is in the light of what is happening that we become more aware of this change of attitude, which is exemplified in the following reply:

"At Dominion Textile, in Magog, between 1956 and 1960 (a period of high unemployment) the unions and the company had made a 'gentleman's agreement', outside the collective agreement, to the effect that in case of a layoff, married women would be the first to be let go. This gentleman's agreement was contrary to the seniority clause in the collective agreement. However, it was applied until one day a married woman worker stood up in a general meeting and said, 'I want the collective agreement to be observed'. All of the men and women had accepted the informal agreement, because they considered it normal in a period of unemployment. Today, even in a period of economic recession, such an agreement is no longer accepted. The women are more sure of their rights and are better versed in the provisions of their collective agreements. If

by chance they should allow a similar agreement to be made, the men would not accept it and would fight for the women."

What the male union members deplore, we believe -- and this is the gist of their answers to question 51 -- is the absence of a consensus, based on the professional status of women, and the lack of clear views as to the objectives to be achieved. This is a criticism levelled at the central labour bodies which do not as yet seem to have defined a general policy designed to encourage the integration of women into our economic life.

"Union thinking often finds expression in words when circumstances require it", a union officer pointed out to us. This is what has happened up to now, with the unions being forced to take a stand as problems were raised at the grass roots level. The time has no doubt come to define a general policy in anticipation of the swift changes both in the labour market and in society.

CONCLUSIONS

If we try to define or to look for the meaning of the facts and comments gathered in this study, we find:

- lingering traditional concepts of the role of women;
- a discrepancy between the individual outlook of union members and their collective attitude;
- a new, more egalitarian concept of women's role in the labour force;
- jobs for women but no women's unionism;
- greater awareness of the problems posed by women's employment, but no coherent policy as to the solutions to be applied.

The reader who has followed attentively the answers of the male trade unionists to the various questions raised by the survey is fully aware at this point that their attitudes towards women in employment range from the traditional ideology of the role of women to a more egalitarian concept of woman's place in our economic life.

Individually, the trade unionists -- whether blue or white collar -- cling to an age-old concept of woman as someone whom the man must provide for, protect, and defend if necessary in exchange for good services as a wife who bears and brings up the children. Deep down, the male union member continues to see himself as sole provider, and he is convinced of his prerogatives in society and in the world of labour in particular. At the same time, he subscribes to the idea that "a woman's place is in the home". However, as a union member he is obliged to look at the situation from a different angle.

He must bow to the facts, namely that increasing numbers of women are working, even married women with families, and that their work is made necessary by economic necessity in the majority of cases. This is why they are tolerated, if not accepted gladly.

There is still a difference between individual thinking and the collective attitude. As members of a union, the

respondents have to admit that women workers have the same rights as themselves and that the union movement should see to it that these rights are recognized and respected. Torn between his concept of the woman's role and his union's activities, the male unionist is of two minds, and this is reflected in his ambiguous attitude.

Differentiation between men's and women's jobs

As long as women stay in occupations labelled as women's occupations, life is greatly simplified for the men union members. When this is the case, the men can retain their privileges and even show a very warm interest in the problems of women workers. They like to give women a special status as workers, and the separation of men's and women's jobs makes them feel particularly secure. When the women workers can be concentrated in and restricted to jobs which the men do not want to do, they are not regarded as rivals or competitors. And male unionists think it natural that these jobs should be remunerated at rates which the men would not accept, because they are the family breadwinners.

This attitude however is gradually dying out, having been dealt a severe blow by the changes that have taken place in the labour market. We have seen for ourselves that a growing number of male unionists are taking more egalitarian positions. This group does not yet comprise the majority of trade-unionists, but it is prepared to defend its points of view in order to give to women who have chosen to work an equal chance in every respect -- hiring, on-the-job training, promotion, and so forth.

Ideas which are gaining ground

In spite of the ambiguous attitudes which still exert a strong influence on the concept of woman's role, men unionists are beginning to realize that childbearing is a function of society for which the female worker should not be penalized. Consequently, the community as a whole should absorb the cost of maternity benefits just as it does for other social measures. At the senior levels, union leaders feel that further action is essential to facilitate the integration of women in the labour force, while recognizing their right to motherhood. But no one can specify what these measures should be. The attitude towards day care centres is evidence of this.

An awakening

We have emphasized the persistence of the old ways of thinking among men unionists because these beliefs are present in all the attitudes of the respondents to the survey. However, they do not completely disguise the emergence of a new way of thinking, particularly among the leaders, which is less concerned with protecting female workers than with defending their rights. Little by little, these rights are being written into the collective agreements. However, it cannot be said that there is any overall, coherent thinking among unionists concerning the professional status of women in our society. It is the problems raised at the local level by women in employment that have forced male union members to formulate their thoughts with a view to possible action.

Our survey shows that at least a third of the union members realize that a piecemeal approach to solutions will no longer do and that sweeping measures will have to be considered in order to facilitate the integration of women into the labour market and to enable those who have family obligations to reconcile their status as workers with their role as mothers. Although all these measures are not necessarily the responsibility of the unions, the unions still have a part to play and, as several respondents repeatedly put it, in some cases the unions will play the role of prime mover.

A closed-circuit picture

The general mentality of male unionists is however still wrapped in a web of contradictions when it comes to the question of women's employment. Convinced that women of necessity work only "for a time", that their wages can only be "pin money", they judge women workers on the basis of these assumptions. Men and women alike are conditioned by this thinking and each reflects to the other a false picture which distorts the whole situation of women in employment. What professional status can you give to a woman who is only temporary in her job, who is only too happy to bring home her "pin money" which will plug a hole in the budget but which does not fulfil her legitimate aspirations? Why should a woman be interested in working conditions, why should she take on responsibilities when she is only there for the time being? Both men and women are prisoners of a ready-made idea that has wide acceptance. According to the union members who answered the questionnaire, it is the women who are most to blame for the position they are in. This attitude of the male unionists should encourage the women to take careful stock of their status in the labour market.

Women must look primarily
to themselves

At the close of this study, one conclusion -- somewhat painful for women -- stands out from all others: It is their own attitude towards employment that largely influences that of the men in the unions. If there is one point on which we felt there was unanimity, both among the rank-and-file and their leaders, it is the behaviour of women. The same answers and the same statements recur again and again.

"If the women themselves, as individuals or as a group within a union, are utterly indifferent, I think that the men will be indifferent to their wishes."

"If the women need it, the union will do something about retraining, day care centres, etc. The women will have to help us and take a more active part."

"Women don't take as much responsibility as they should. As a result, they almost always play a minor role."

"The union movement is like other institutions which contribute to the development of society. If women are to have a real status in society, they are the ones who must build that status, must make it their business to assume the place in society that is theirs by right. They should stop whining about the men and criticizing them."

"I believe that as trade-unionists we must take our share of the blame. I think the big problem is with the women themselves; they have not paid enough attention to their problems arising from work. Most women who work agree to do so for 5 or 10 years, to gain a little security, to get a little money in the bank or a little more comfort in the home. But generally speaking, unless they are forced into it by circumstances, they do not think of making a career of their job."

Until women take a stand on their own professional status, they cannot expect swift changes in the thinking of their male colleagues.

If union members as a pressure group are to define and put into practice policies designed to ensure the working woman the full exercise of her rights, what they need most is sustained and enlightened effort by the women.

NEW CANADIANS AND ENGLISH CANADIANS

IN TRADE UNIONS

The study project entrusted to us by the Royal Commission on the Status of Women called for a survey of the attitudes and opinions of New Canadian and English-Canadians concerning the remunerative employment of women. As it turned out, 3.7% of our statistical sample were individuals of these two categories. Needless to say, so scanty a population can hardly be expected to provide a complete and faithful representation of the mentality prevailing among New Canadians and English-Canadians, and it would be hazardous to conclude that the opinions collected truly reflect the attitudes of the respective ethnic communities at large. But the structure of unions, such as it is in the Province of Quebec, makes the establishment of contacts with specific ethnic groups difficult.

English-language workers:

Those answering our questionnaire were, in part, English-speaking members of unions with a largely French-Canadian membership, members of a union of typographers with a predominantly English-Canadian membership, and, finally, members of an international union (ITT). Interviews were conducted with a number of English-speaking union executives. Our analysis of data collected from these sources has shown no significantly different attitudes prevailing in the English-Canadian environment from those prevailing in the French-Canadian, previously presented.

New Canadian workers:

The labour movement, we have found, tends to level differences and to favour the complete integration of workers in union locals, regardless of their age, sex or ethnic origin. Nevertheless, there are certain obstacles hindering the complete integration of new Canadians into the labour movement, as the following statement by a union president (himself a new Canadian) will show:

"We have some 270 workers -- both men and women -- in our union, representing 22 nationalities: Slavic, Italian, Portuguese, Polish, Greek, German, and so forth. It is very difficult to find out the opinions of these workers, not only as regards the employment of women but also

concerning other problems. One of the great hardships that we have to face in our union is the problem of communication. When we have a meeting, for example, we may require as many as ten interpreters, and our meetings very often go on for as long as seven or eight hours. Little wonder if there are so few convinced and committed militants."

Difficulties both of communication
and of integration:

"The new Canadians that we have had on our union executive have tended, on the whole, to be conservative and none too demanding. They were elected really to represent various ethnic points of view. The Canadian membership made them see that their ideas and union ideologies, although probably perfectly good in an European context, were not in step with the system prevailing in this country, and that they had to understand local conditions before they could meaningfully participate in the affairs of the union."

We may add at this point that in our own experience we found new Canadians rather nervous and reticent when faced with an interviewer and, particularly, with a tape-recorder. The majority of union presidents interviewed emphasized that there was no discrimination practised in their unions.

Before our survey might have become truly representative of the opinions of diverse ethnic groups, we would have needed a team of interpreters and translators as numerous as the variety of national origins of the workers required. Unfortunately, neither the time nor the budget available to us enabled us to pursue this aspect of our investigation fully.

APPENDIX I

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF ANSWERS

FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS

- 1.- READ EACH QUESTION CAREFULLY AND FULLY.
- 2.- PUT AN "X" IN THE BOX OPPOSITE THE ANSWER YOU HAVE SELECTED.
- 3.- WARNING: IF SEVERAL ANSWERS ARE POSSIBLE, CHOOSE WHICHEVER
ONE YOU FEEL IS MOST IMPORTANT.

WOMEN AT WORK AS VIEWED BY A TRADE-UNIONIST

(PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS OF ANSWERS)

1.- MARRIED STATUS

1	Married	82.7%
2	Separated or divorced	.8%
3	Single	16.1%

2.- AGE

1	16 to 20	1.6%
2	20 to 30	30.7%
3	30 to 50	57.4%
4		8.2%

3.- CHILDREN

1	Boys only	20.8%
2	Girls only	11.9%
3	Boys and girls	39.3%
4	No children	15.4%

4.- PLACE OF RESIDENCE

1	Montreal Region	53.5%
2	Quebec Region	8.8%
3	Saguenay	15.8%
4	Trois-Rivieres Region	.8%
5	Eastern Townships	7.8%
6	Lower St. Laurent	8.2%
7	Other areas in Quebec	3.1%
8	Province other than Quebec	.4%

5.- OCCUPATION

1	Manual worker	53.3%
2	Civil Servant	8.4%
3	Services	13.8%
4	Business	4.5%
5	Profession	5.4%
6	Teacher	2.3%
7	Other	9.1%

6.- YEARS OF UNION MEMBERSHIP

1	Less than 5	38.3%
2	5 to 10	26.7%
3	More than 10	30.2%

7.- UNION STATUS

1	Member	57.2%
2	Union employee	8.2%
3	Union leader	26.7%
4	Other	3.9%

8.- ETHNIC ORIGIN

1	French-Canadian	91.6%
2	English-Canadian	3.7%
3	Other	3.7%

9.- IF YOU ARE NEITHER FRENCH-CANADIAN NOR ENGLISH-CANADIAN,
ARE YOU A CANADIAN CITIZEN?

1	Yes	31.7%
2	No	5.1%

10.- DOES YOUR WIFE WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME?

1	Yes	22.4%
2	No	62.1%

11.- IF SHE WORKS OUTSIDE THE HOME, IS HER EMPLOYMENT

1	Full-time	15.4%
2	Part-time	8.0%

WOMAN AND GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

12.- DO YOU APPROVE OF MARRIED WOMEN WORKING?

(a) If they have no children

1	Yes	73.7%
2	No	23.5%

(b) If they have young children

1	Yes	8.6%
2	No	85.2%

(c) If their children are of school age

1	Yes	22.4%
2	No	71.2%

13.- DO YOU THINK THAT WOMEN SHOULD RETURN TO THE LABOUR MARKET WHEN THEIR CHILDREN ARE GROWN UP?

1	Yes	44.4%
2	No	33.1%
3	Undecided	19.8%

14.- DO WOMEN DISPLACE MEN ON THE LABOUR MARKET?

1	Yes	20.0%
2	No	29.0%
3	Sometimes	47.5%
4	Undecided	1.6%

15.- DO YOU HAVE FEMALE COMPANIONS AT WORK?

1	Yes	53.9%
2	No	41.6%

16.- IF SO, ARE THEY MOSTLY

1	Single	36.2%
2	Married	23.3%

17.- WHY DO YOUR MARRIED FEMALE COMPANIONS WORK?

1	To make ends meet	30.5%
2	Self-emancipation	3.3%
3	To afford luxuries	17.5%
4	They like work	2.1%
5	Other reasons	5.1%

18.- DO THESE FEMALE COMPANIONS DO
WORK WHICH IS SUITABLE FOR A WOMAN?

1	Yes	50.4%
2	No	8.0%
3	No opinion	8.9%

19.- DOES IT PAY FOR A MARRIED WOMAN TO
WORK OUTSIDE THE HOME?

1	Yes	45.1%
2	No	28.4%
3	Undecided	19.5%

20.- IF YOU HAD TO WORK UNDER A WOMAN,
YOU WOULD BE

1	Indifferent	41.8%
2	Displeased	31.9%
3	Pleased	9.9%
4	Undecided	12.1%

21.- MOST MEN DO NOT LIKE HAVING A WOMAN
AS A BOSS

1	True	67.7%
2	False	12.6%
3	Undecided	15.0%

22.- FEW WOMEN ACHIEVE MANAGERIAL
STATUS

1	True	73.2%
2	False	15.0%
3	Undecided	8.4%

23.- IN YOUR OPINION, WHY DO FEW WOMEN
ACHIEVE MANAGERIAL STATUS

1	Lack of ambition	8.9%
2	Lack of ability	22.0%
3	Lack of interest	9.5%
4	Lack of authority	23.3%
5	Other reasons	27.6%

24.- WOMEN COMPLAIN THAT THEY CANNOT
OBTAIN CERTAIN POSITIONS

They are boycotted by the men

1	True	35.8%
2	False	42.2%
3	Undecided	18.1%

IF YOU ARE MARRIED, ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS; IF NOT, GO TO QUESTION 30

25.- IF YOUR WIFE IS GAINFULLY
EMPLOYED, WHY DOES SHE WORK?

1	She likes work	3.7%
2	For her health	1.2%
3	Self-emancipation	2.3%
4	To make ends meet	18.1%
5	For personal fulfillment	4.3%
6	To pay for the children's schooling	1.6%
7	Other reasons	2.5%

26.- IS SHE FINANCIALLY OBLIGED TO WORK?

1	Yes	15.6%
2	No	30.5%

27.- WOULD YOU RATHER YOUR WIFE
STAYED AT HOME?

1	Yes	56.8%
2	No	6.8%
3	Undecided	4.9%

29.- IN ORDER TO HELP KEEP WOMEN IN THE
HOME, DO YOU FEEL UNIONS SHOULD
NEGOTIATE HIGHER WAGES FOR MEN?

1	Yes	61.1%
2	No	9.7%
3	Impossible	6.8%

WAGE PARITY

30.- WAGE PARITY IS NOT RECOGNIZED
EVERYWHERE IN QUEBEC

1	True	78.6%
2	False	6.4%
3	Undecided	10.3%

32.- IS WAGE PARITY BETWEEN MEN AND
WOMEN SOMETHING

1	Of no concern	14.0%
2	The unions should fight for	76.3%

34.- HAS YOUR UNION TAKEN A STAND ON
THIS QUESTION?

1	Yes	37.7%
2	No	25.5%
3	Not yet	21.0%

28.- IF YOU WOULD RATHER SHE STAYED AT
HOME, IS IT BECAUSE OF

1	The children's welfare	44.7%
2	Good housekeeping	7.2%
3	You would save money	2.1%
4	Your welfare	4.3%
5	Other reasons	3.5%

31.- DOES THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUAL PAY FOR
EQUAL WORK APPLY IN YOUR TYPE OF WORK?

1	Yes	42.2%
2	No	45.7%

33.- WOULD YOU BE PREPARED TO DEFEND A
GRIEVANCE ON WAGE PARITY?

1	Yes	78.6%
2	No	5.4%
3	Undecided	9.1%

35.- IN YOUR OPINION, WAGE PARITY WILL
BE ACHIEVED

1	In 5 years	31.3%
2	In 10 years	30.2%
3	In 25 years	8.9%
4	Never	14.6%

NIGHT WORK

36.- WOMEN SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO DO
NIGHT WORK IN THE MANUFACTURING
INDUSTRIES

1	Yes	8.6%	
2	No	67.5%	
3	Under certain conditions	21.0%	

38.- HAS YOUR UNION TAKEN A STAND ON
THE QUESTION OF NIGHT WORK FOR
WOMEN?

1	Yes	17.5%
2	No	55.8%
3	Undecided	15.0%

MATERNITY LEAVE

40.- IN YOUR OPINION, SHOULD A PREGNANT
WOMAN BE ENTITLED TO PAID MATERNITY
LEAVE?

1	Yes	65.6%
2	No	18.9%
3	Undecided	11.9%

42.- ON HER RETURN TO WORK, SHOULD
A MOTHER BE ENTITLED

(a) To reinstatement in her job

1	Yes	85.0%
2	No	8.6%

(b) To retain her seniority

1	Yes	85.4%
2	No	6.4%

37.- NIGHT WORK SHOULD BE ABOLISHED

(a) For men

1	Yes	40.1%
2	No	49.0%

(b) For women

1	Yes	73.2%
2	No	13.4%

(c) Only for women

1	Yes	40.3%
2	No	31.1%

39.- IF YOUR UNION HAS TAKEN A STAND,
IS IT

1	For night work	8.8%
2	Against night work	29.6%

41.- WOULD YOU BE PREPARED TO GO ON STRIKE
FOR MATERNITY LEAVE WITHOUT LOSS OF
PAY?

1	Yes	32.1%
2	No	39.7%
3	Undecided	22.2%

43.- DOES YOUR COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT PROVIDE
THIS TYPE OF PROTECTION FOR WOMEN?

1	Yes	38.3%
2	No	28.0%
3	Not yet	11.9%
4	Unnecessary	4.7%

44.- AT PRESENT, MARRIED WORKING WOMEN
WANT TOO MANY PRIVILEGES

1	Yes	13.0%
2	No	66.1%
3	Undecided	14.2%

WOMEN AND THE UNIONS

45.- DO WORKING WOMEN TAKE AS MUCH
INTEREST IN UNIONS AS MEN?

1	Yes	36.8%
2	No	50.0%
3	Undecided	7.8%

46.- ARE WOMEN MEMBERS MILITANTLY
ACTIVE IN THE UNIONS?

1	Yes	34.0%
2	No	24.9%
3	Not very active	30.7%

47.- IN YOUR OPINION, WHY ARE THERE
SO FEW WOMEN IN POSITIONS OF
RESPONSIBILITY IN THE UNIONS?

1	Lack of interest	29.4%
2	Lack of information	33.1%
3	They find it hard to work with men	12.8%
4	Obstruction on the part of the men	12.8%

48.- DO YOU FAVOUR

1	Full integration of women in unions	52.3%
2	Unions for women	6.2%
3	Women's committees within unions	28.0%

YOUR UNION EXPERIENCE

49.- BEFORE YOU JOINED YOUR UNION,
WOULD YOU HAVE GIVEN THE SAME
ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS?

1	Yes	55.1%
2	No	37.2%

50.- HAS YOUR UNION EXPERIENCE CHANGED
YOUR OPINIONS ON THE QUESTION OF
WOMEN WORKING OUTSIDE THE HOME?

1	Yes	31.9%
2	No	60.5%

51.- DO YOU FEEL THAT SO FAR UNIONS HAVE
BEEN SUFFICIENTLY CONCERNED WITH THE
FUTURE OF THE EMPLOYED WOMAN?

1	Yes	29.0%
2	No	46.7%
3	Undecided	16.3%

APPENDIX II

THE FEMALE LABOUR FORCE
IN QUEBEC

EMPLOYED AND UNEMPLOYED WOMEN

(in thousands)

QUEBEC

1961 - 1965

	<u>Employed Women</u>	<u>Unemployed Women</u>
November 1945	278	17
" 1946	269	6
" 1947	284	5
" 1948	281	3
" 1949	307	7
" 1950	317	10
" 1951	319	8
" 1952	340	8
" 1953	374	10
" 1954	352	13
" 1955	345	11
" 1956	366	7
" 1957	388	11
" 1958	403	18
" 1959	423	15
" 1960	435	22
" 1961	450	17
" 1962	460	20
" 1963	513	20
" 1964	516	17
" 1965	560	18
" 1966	617	18
" 1967	645	23
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	9,242	297

THE RELATIVE REPRESENTATION OF THE SEXES
IN DIVERSE OCCUPATIONS

	<u>QUEBEC - 1961</u>	
	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
<u>Service Sector</u>	62.9	37.1
Transportation	91.8	8.2
Public services	48.9	51.1
Sales	70.9	29.1
Office work	45.4	54.6
Professional and Technical	56.1	43.9
Administration	89.4	10.6
<u>Production of goods</u> (craftsmen)	81.9	18.1
<u>Primary industries</u>	92.2	7.8
Unskilled Labour	93.6	6.4
Mining	99.9	0.1 ^{1/}
Fishing and Trapping	98.3	1.7
Logging	99.8	0.2
Farming	88.4	11.6

SOURCE: D.B.S. Census of Canada, 1961;
Bulletin 3.1 - 3 and Table.

^{1/} All percentages below 0.1 were rounded out to 0.1.

DISTRIBUTION OF WOMEN ACCORDING TO MARITAL STATUS
(Percentages)

1962 - 1967

CANADA

Matrimonial Status	Population	Labour Force	Employed
<u>1967</u>			
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Single	25.5	37.4	36.9
Married	63.6	53.3	53.8
Other ^{1/}	10.9	9.3	9.3

<u>1962</u>			
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
Single	24.1	41.7	41.1
Married	65.2	48.4	49.0
Other ^{1/}	10.7	9.9	9.9

1/ Widowed, separated or divorced

SOURCE: Women in the Labour Force, Canada Department of Labour,
April 1968.

APPENDIX III

TRADE-UNION MEMBERSHIP
OF WOMEN

STATISTICS ON FEMALE TRADE-UNION MEMBERSHIP - 1965

Statistics extracted from the Report
of 1965, in regard to the law concerning the
declarations of corporations and trade-unions

CANADA

Total of trade-union membership	1,761,650	
Total of female membership		292,056
Percentage of female membership in relation to total trade-union membership		16.6%

QUEBEC

Total of trade-union membership	446,640	
Total of female membership		90,635
Percentage of female membership in relation to total trade-union membership		20.3%

Percentage of Quebec female membership (90,635) in relation to the total female membership in Canada (292,056)		31 %
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Percentage of Quebec female membership (90,635) in relation to the total trade-union membership in Canada (1,761,650)		5.1%
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May 2, 1968.

